

Palestinian Education in the  
Occupied Territories.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis provides an analysis of the nature of Palestinian education under Israeli military occupation. Confidential interviews, currently available field research, and a theoretical background form the basis from which the author has constructed a picture of the nature of Palestinian education under occupation.

The major topics covered include a political history of the Arab-Israeli conflict including the adoption of the internal colonialism theoretical perspective; an analysis of the relationship between colonialism and education; the special significance of education to the Palestinians and the Israelis; an outline of Palestinian education under occupation with particular reference to the post-1967 era; an account of Palestinian life under military occupation which details the inhumane treatment of Palestinian residents of the Occupied Territories by the Israeli military authorities and settlers; the revolutionary nature of the intifada; the targeting of Palestinian university staff and students by Israelis for especially harsh treatment; the massive Israeli crack-down on Palestinian formal and informal education and the implications for the Palestinians of the widespread and prolonged closures of Palestinian schools and universities.

The author concludes that the Israeli authorities have specifically targeted Palestinian education as an area which they want to maintain close control over. The Israelis desire the Palestinian population (particularly in the Occupied



Territories) to have only limited, token educational opportunities, in order to keep them ignorant, and passive. During the intifada then, the Israelis have severely disrupted all levels of Palestinian education. Widespread school and university closures have been used by the Israelis to collectively punish the Palestinian community and hinder their chances of developing a strong independent Palestinian infrastructure which could become the foundation of a Palestinian state.

## INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian uprising (intifada), which erupted in December 1987 and has continued gaining local Palestinian and international support with every passing month, is an expression of the anger, humiliation and frustration which has been building up since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip began in 1967. The Israeli government has chosen to deal with this revolutionary movement by stepping up its 'iron fist policy' and inflicting increasingly severe acts of violence and repression on the Palestinian people. The Israelis have used the uprising as an excuse for attacking the infrastructure of Palestinian society. Collective punishment has been a major tool used by the Israeli authorities to ensure that the Palestinians will be incapable of running an independent state. One of the major targets of this policy of collective punishment has been education (both the formal and informal sectors).

This thesis was undertaken because of my concern about the lack of information about and analysis of the recent closures of Palestinian schools and universities. Very little has been written about why the Israelis have chosen to attack the education of young Palestinians, and what the likely effects of this act will be. This paper addresses these questions, and attempts to foster an understanding of the significance of education to the survival of the Palestinian people.

Chapter One provides a theoretical analysis of the recent political and educational history of the Palestinian people. After examining the major theories of colonialism, pluralism and internal colonialism, I argue that internal colonialism is the theoretical position which best explains the Arab-Israeli conflict. Internal colonialism allows us to understand the capture of Palestinian land, and the consequent economic exploitation of the Arab people in terms of the Jewish settlers' desires to create an exclusively Jewish state, in the land they believe to be their birthright.

Chapter Two links the colonization of the land with the domination of the Palestinian people through education. By making the Arabs dependent on foreign educational systems and practices, the Israelis (like other colonialists) attempted to subjugate them for their own primarily economic purposes. In this chapter, I examine the special role of education in recent Palestinian history, and look at what the Palestinians perceive to be its role in their future. The nature of Palestinian education under Israeli occupation is analysed in this chapter, and compared with the educational progress of the Jewish Israelis and the level of government support and funding the Jewish sector receives. Although the Palestinians face obstacles such as severe staff shortages, limited funding and inadequate resources, they have the highest educational achievements in the Arab world. This reflects their deep commitment to education.

Chapter Three gives an account of Palestinian life under occupation and outlines the inhumane treatment of Palestinians

at the hands of the Israeli military government. The use of arbitrary arrests, beatings, deportations, forms of collective punishment such as house demolitions, and economic exploitation is described. This chapter outlines how education has been specifically targeted by the Israelis as a sector which needs to be closely controlled. The Palestinian universities, as the only independent institutions in the Occupied Territories, have been singled out as potentially dangerous bodies which must be treated with suspicion and mistrust. The staff and students are therefore regularly subjected to varying acts of censorship, repression and violence.

Chapter Four provides an account of the origins of the intifada and explains how the uprising has developed into a widespread, popular revolutionary movement of momentous proportions. The involvement of the whole Palestinian community and the way in which each of the various groups participate is described. The violent reaction of the Israeli military authorities is outlined and analysed. This chapter describes in detail the widespread crack-down on all levels of Palestinian education, and why the Israelis chose to enforce such severe measures. By examining the Israeli rationale for this policy, we are able to see that there are serious and powerful reasons motivating the Israeli attack on formal and informal education. This section also outlines the response of the Palestinian community to the school and university closures.

The final chapter examines the likely educational, psychological, social and economic consequences of this long-term withdrawal of education on the Palestinian community. In the final section I propose that the closure of the universities and the schools has indirectly inspired the growth and development of the intifada, by stimulating the politicization of the population and has played a part in ensuring the participation of the majority of Palestinians regardless of their age, gender or class.

## CHAPTER I

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT;  
A THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONColonialism.

The theory of traditional colonialism describes the colonizing of one country by representatives of another country. Colonies are established through the subjugation of land by conquest. The colonized land and its people are placed under the political and economic protection of the conqueror. Colonization involves 'occupation with domination' and 'emigration with legislation'.<sup>1</sup> Following the discoveries of new lands, Britain and other leading European powers were determined to expand and enrich their empires by settling in new lands and acquiring their valuable natural resources. Any non-European lands were considered 'vacant' regardless of the level of local inhabitation. The colonialists sought to purchase as much good land as possible, usually by 'legal' means. Jabbour explains that for a land to be legitimately colonized, the conquering people instituted 'certain colonial, imperial acts' which ensured the 'legality' of the colonization. Following settlement however, colonizers proceeded to treat the indigenous people of their new land inhumanely.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Palestine Question, Edward Risk, trans. (Beirut, The Institute of Palestine Studies, 1968), p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> G. Jabbour, Settler Colonialism in Southern Africa and the Middle East, (Beirut, PLO Research Centre, 1970), p. 7.

Once colonial settlers had established themselves and their political, economic and educational institutions, they set about the process Fanon describes as 'incorporation'. The first stage of incorporation is the adoption by the newly colonized people of the 'strata of national bourgeoisie of a language of politics'. Zureik rightly points out that this adoption of "western liberal-democratic political concepts, such as individualism, compromise, competition, political parties, and so forth..." is detrimental to the colonized people. This approach to politics is very often not only unfamiliar to the native people, but also in direct conflict with their concepts of community organization.<sup>3</sup>

The second stage of incorporation involves the importation of what Fanon calls 'a brand of cultural imperialism under the guise of western social science'. In this way educators, economists and western 'experts' in every modern industrial field, convinced the local inhabitants how primitive their ways were, and how desperately they were in need of civilization.

The third stage of incorporation was the co-opting of two types of natives; the traditional collaborators - 'chiefs, caids and witch-doctors' and the 'lumpen-proletariat'. Collaborators are those who will betray or harm the welfare of their own people for money, and the latter are those who "if it is not mobilized, will find itself fighting as hired soldiers side by side with the colonial troops".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> E.T. Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

The local inhabitants of the newly colonized lands had two options; they could either assimilate, or revolt. In either case the colonization of their lands cost them considerably. Most colonies were under foreign domination and control for many years before they were able to regain their independence; most lost access to scarce natural resources; their economies were transformed by the colonialists to suit the needs of the metropolis nation; the traditional cultural, religious and social customs of the indigenous population were often vilified by the colonizers. The major purpose of colonialism then, was to gain valuable assets and lands, and to create a new trading market for the Empire, by subjugating the local population, so that they would welcome the 'civilizing' visitors.

#### Internal Colonialism.

In cases of internal colonialism, by contrast with traditional colonialism, settlers have substantially different motivations. Altbach and Kelly differentiate between classical and internal colonialism accurately and concisely.

Under classical colonialism, colonies were established for exploitation and trade rather than for settlement. In most instances, the colonizer merely ruled and exploited; he did not seek to replace the colonized. Internal colonialism, historically, has entailed usurpation and replacement.<sup>5</sup>

In classical colonialism the colonizing group did not plan to settle permanently in the colony; they certainly never intended to force out the local inhabitants. Most colonialists

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<sup>5</sup> P.G. Altbach, and G.P. Kelly, Education and Colonialism, (New York, Longman Inc., 1978), p. 21.



continued to treat the mother country as home. In cases of internal colonialism, the settler group remained in the country in sizeable numbers and largely cut themselves off from their native countries. Communities colonized by internal colonialism then, suffered a different form of exploitation. In contrast to classical colonialism, 'settler colonies' were not settled in the interests of a metropolitan power for exclusively economic reasons, but were colonized directly for the purposes of expropriating the land.

Adam claims that those who conquer and settle 'settler colonies' are forced to maintain a degree of harmony with the native people as their intention is the permanent occupation of the land.<sup>6</sup> At first, the dominant group in a 'settler colony' is more likely to treat the local inhabitants with respect in order to gain a level of trust. In this way they are able to buy enough land to gain a real presence in their new home. Once they have established a substantial community, many of the colonialists practices are very similar to those of more traditional colonialists. So while there is some truth in Adam's proposition, the harsh treatment and the exploitation of native communities by both classical and internal colonizers is well documented.

#### The Use of Education by Colonizers.

Education is used by the dominant groups in classical colonialism and internal colonialism to gain political, economic, and legal supremacy. In the case of internal

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<sup>6</sup> Zuriek, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 16.

colonialism, the settlers use education to absorb the indigenous people into their culture. They point out to the local population how they are disadvantaged and how they can improve their standard of living and general lifestyle by education. They call this 'modernization' and 'progress'. The settlers warn that those who do not accept the opportunity for self improvement, will remain an underclass.

Altbach and Kelly highlight that 'internal colonialism's goal - the eradication of the nation' is the main difference in the way education is used by classical and internal colonizers.<sup>7</sup> Internal colonizers aim to assimilate or absorb the colonized into their societal structure. Classical colonizers also attempt to impose their educational programmes on colonized people, but their intentions differ because their role is not to become the majority population. Internal colonizers can be seen more easily to be promoting and expanding the opportunities of the colonized people because they seem to integrate that society into their own rather than imposing an alien system onto a powerless community.

### Pluralism.

The theory of pluralism sees cultural diversity and the segregation of groups on social, racial and cultural grounds as the primary precondition for political conflict between groups in a society. Societies are pluralistic to the extent that they are culturally diverse and structurally fragmented.

Pluralism is characterised by the relative absence of value consensus; the relative rigidity and clarity of group definition; the relative presence of conflict, or,

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<sup>7</sup> Altbach and Kelly, Education and Colonialism, p. 29.

at least, of lack of integration and complementarity between various parts of the social system; the segmentary and specific character of relationships, and the relative existence of sheer institutional duplication (as opposed to functional differentiation or specialization) between the various segments of the society.<sup>8</sup>

Theorists have developed a conceptual scheme in order to outline the major themes of pluralism. The scheme consists of five parts: setting (the historical and social conditions which prevail), pluralism (manifested by cultural diversity and social separation), inequality (in distribution of resources - resulting in unequal power and socioeconomic status), cohesion (between groups) and change (which is both inevitable and unpredictable).<sup>9</sup>

Furnivall describes plural societies as artificial entities created by 'western imperialism' and maintained through "political coercion for economic exploitation of non-white populations".<sup>10</sup> In plural societies the dominant group uses a process similar to that used by traditional colonialists to gain political power. They incorporate small numbers of the members of the local inhabitant's group into their political system in order to divide the native population and gain the overwhelming majority of power for their own group.<sup>11</sup>

Pluralists believe the desire for political and economic power to be the fundamental goal of the dominant group; they achieve

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<sup>8</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> S. Smoocha, Israel, Pluralism and Conflict, (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

this by maintaining and accentuating the differences between the groups.

### Critique of Pluralism.

There are three important reasons why pluralism does not provide us with the most accurate or appropriate foundation to understand the Palestinian situation. Firstly, the emphasis on the rigid separate development of the different groups in society is too great. Israel is not run by an exclusively Jewish political leadership, or dominated by exclusively Jewish institutions; very few multi-ethnic societies exist this way as there is almost always a degree of incorporation or assimilation of the local inhabitants into the dominant political system and culture. Pluralism does not take account of the co-operation, shared activities or common institutions, and paints a simplistic picture of the way groups interrelate in a multi-ethnic society.

The second reason why pluralism does not explain the Palestinian situation is that it focuses on the cultural and social differences between the groups rather than analysing the system of domination in Israel. Pluralist theorists attribute too great an importance to the differing cultural and psychological characteristics of the Jews and the Arabs.

The policy implications of such a theoretical perspective are clear: the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is to be sought in 'educating' the Arabs in a modern culture which would appreciate the significance of an advanced Israel and would enable Arabs to adjust better to its modern culture. <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 198.

Pluralist theorists then, finds the colonized community 'wanting'. This perspective offers a flawed account of the Palestinian's position in Israeli society. Although the Palestinians have attempted to 'educate' themselves and have reached high educational standards, their status has not altered, their standard of living has deteriorated and they are no closer to gaining any of their political demands. If we regard the current position of Arabs in Israel and the Occupied Territories, "the isolated cultural and psychological explanations of the disadvantaged position of the Arabs in Israel become of dubious validity." <sup>13</sup>

Finally, pluralism does not allow for the politicization of the local inhabitants. They are seen in this perspective as passive people who accept their subservient position and do not challenge the dominant group's authority in any meaningful way. This is not an accurate description of the stand taken by the Palestinians. A theory which allows for the possibility, indeed the probability of the transformation of the status of the minority group, is more useful for our case study. The colonialism and internal colonialism theories offer us this, as well as other valuable ideas.

#### Critique of Internal Colonialism.

Internal colonialism is the most useful theory in explaining the current state in Israel while the classical colonialism theory best explains the situation in the Occupied Territories. In order to assess accurately the changing nature

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

of Palestinian and Israeli societies we must analyse the changes that have taken place due mainly to territorial ownership and control. I suggest that Israel today is a neo-colonial state which is best explained by the internal colonialism theory.

The nature of the colonization in Palestine differed from classical colonialism because the settlers almost exclusively focused on the land. The aim of the Jewish settlers was to displace the Arab people and to live on their land. Unlike classical colonizers, the foundation of their society did not depend on the subjugation of the indigenous people.

Internal colonialism offers a framework within which we can understand the Zionist movement. Zionism can be described as a colonial movement, Israel as a neocolonial state and Israeli society as a society which oppresses its non-Jewish population.<sup>14</sup> This leads us to conclude that colonial theory best explains the existing structural features which determine the nature of modern Israeli society. Because the establishment of a Jewish state was the primary goal of the Zionists and a suitable homeland was what the Zionists needed, they were initially interested in the Palestine primarily for the land. They had little interest in exploiting the Arab people economically, as opposed to traditional colonial settlers. In more recent years however, Israel has seen it in its best interests to economically exploit the Arab citizens and the transient workers from the Occupied Territories.

#### Critique of Classical Colonialism.

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<sup>14</sup> Smoocha, Israel, Pluralism and Conflict, p. 33.

Traditional colonialism best explains the current crisis which faces the Palestinians who live under occupation in the territories. The Israelis did not return the Occupied Territories in exchange for peace, even though they had already established the desired homeland for the Jewish people. The failure to allow the Arab people a place to live in peace, is an example of the colonial mentality which had pervaded the thinking of the Israeli leaders. They saw their control of the Occupied Territories as an opportunity to expand their kingdom and to increase their wealth through the exploitation of the inhabitants of the Occupied Territories. It is important then to understand that the experiences of the inhabitants of Israel and the Occupied Territories are very different. The neocolonial Jewish state, itself established by Zionist colonialism, continues the tradition by exercising internal colonialism on its non-European population and classical colonialism in the Occupied Territories.

## CHAPTER II

### EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

#### i. The Politics of Education

Schools in most societies have the dual role of transmitting knowledge and cultural values from generation to generation, and developing the sorts of skills and traits essential for productive economic development and growth. For an education system to achieve these objectives effectively it must have legitimacy. The general public should believe that their interests are being served by the institutions and that even if they 'failed', their children have the opportunity to succeed. Schools act as society's primary allocation agency and play a significant role in maintaining the status quo. Shavit describes the education system as a complex combination of forces. While acknowledging the allocation role of schools, Shavit also points out the revolutionary capability of schooling.<sup>1</sup> This aspect of the role of education is very relevant the study of Palestinian schooling, and will be discussed below.

When assessing the role of education in society, to some degree, one must address the dilemma of whether the state "is the primary locus of social organisation and vehicle of

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<sup>1</sup> Y. Shavit, . "Tracking and the Educational Spiral: Arab and Jewish Patterns of Educational Expansion." Comparative Education Review, Vol. 33, No. 2, (May 1989), p. 95-96.



societal development" <sup>2</sup> or whether the individual is the "the basic unit of social action, the ultimate source of value, and the locus of social meaning." <sup>3</sup> If one believes the former, one will see education as a way of socializing children to be effective agents for the state, to identify with national symbols and to be ready to work towards building a stronger nation. In all societies the education system is operated under the auspices of the state and often exclusive control is exercised by the state. Powerful centralised nations often infuse state educational systems with 'national symbols, rules, and resources'. <sup>4</sup> The overwhelming control of primary education by the state is an international phenomenon. If one believes the latter, one will see education as a process whereby individuals are socialized and educated for personal growth and development and the means by which individuals can discover their abilities, strengths, likes and dislikes. Advocates of this theory see the school as largely replacing the family's function of socialization. The school functions by producing young adults with competent social skills as well as academic ability. School then, should prepare children adequately to take their place in society. <sup>5</sup> The first concept of the 'collectivist force' interprets education as being primarily for the development, growth and economic improvement of a nation. The second school of

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

thought, the 'individualist force', identifies education as the means by which individuals can create a more fulfilling and prosperous future for themselves. As education is a complex institution, it would be simplistic not to appreciate the many faceted role it plays in society.

### Colonial Education.

Colonial education has been attacked on many fronts. It has been seen with hindsight, as exploitative and damaging to its recipients. Many have criticised the language, curriculum, examination procedures and style of teaching as culturally and educationally inappropriate. The educational needs of the colonized were largely ignored in favour of the economic aspirations of the colonizers. Colonial education imposed an alien culture on the existing local population. Altbach and Kelly examine the role of colonial education in preparing the indigenous population for different positions in society depending on their level of schooling. <sup>6</sup> Their analysis of the role colonial education plays in the formation of new inter-group divisions is useful.

Colonial education is now often held responsible for causing the educational problems these countries are facing today. It seems that colonial education paid insufficient attention to the development of mass education, higher education, adult literacy and appropriate vocational education. Watson correctly concludes that many of the current Third world educational development problems are directly attributable to

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<sup>6</sup> Altbach and Kelly, Education and Colonialism, p. 4.

the educational policies of the colonial powers.<sup>7</sup> The colonizing aspect of western education in developing nations is expressed by Carnoy as a process which attempts to fit indigenous people into a hierarchy which is often inappropriate.<sup>8</sup> Although colonial education can be seen to be responsible for protecting the needs of the colonizers at the expense of the indigenous population, there is a valid debate regarding the value of western educational systems in developing nations.

In post-colonial history, most newly independent nations have readily adopted the notion that education is the means by which they can achieve the knowledge, skills and technological accomplishment necessary to modernize their economies and set them on the track towards economic independence and prosperity. Education has been sold by the powerful western nations on whom these developing nations rely, as having almost magical abilities to cure their industrial and technological deficiencies, and to 'promote' them into the realm of the modern, developed world. Many developing nations have unrealistic expectations of what 'modern' education systems can do for their people.<sup>9</sup>

#### Functionalist Theory.

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<sup>7</sup> K. Watson, ed. Education in the Third World, (Great Britain, Croom Helm Ltd., 1982), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> M. Carnoy, Education as Cultural Imperialism, (U.S.A., David McKay Co. Inc., 1974), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Shavit, "Tracking and the Educational Spiral: Arab and Jewish Patterns of Educational Expansion." p.78.

A prominent theoretical perspective of education in developing nations is the functionalist theory. Some functionalist theories explain underdevelopment in terms of low economic productivity. This in turn is the consequence of the underdeveloped state of human capital in that economy. Functionalists look to an improvement in human capital as a solution to underdevelopment.<sup>10</sup> Proponents of this theory see the labour force consisting of a linear range of occupations between which anyone can move freely (up or down the social ladder). They believe that those at the bottom of the occupational scale have some sort of deficiency (such as laziness or limited intelligence) which prevents them from progressing up the occupational ladder. They explain that underdeveloped countries suffer from a lack of sufficiently well-educated citizens and that a western-style modern mass education system will provide them with the skills they need. Functionalists place the responsibility for the state of underdevelopment upon the victims. The theory claims that the proper use of the western education system provides a way out of the state of underdevelopment.<sup>11</sup>

This analysis makes the false assumption that those competing for educational and therefore financial and occupational rewards are competing equally. That the most able and dedicated students are the ones who succeed, is crucial to the legitimacy of education's capacity to provide an equitable, just form of social advancement.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

### Conflict Theory.

Conflict theory argues that the functionalist analysis is intrinsically flawed. Underdevelopment is understood to be a consequence not of underproduction, but of unevenly distributed wealth and power. Conflict theorists reject the notion that education provides true equality of opportunity for its participants, and that those who fail, deserve to do so. They see this as a simplistic and unrealistic analysis which ignores the central issue of the conflict between groups for scarce resources. Their view of the world is dominated by the conception that society is comprised of groups of people who struggle to gain political and hence economic power. In terms of developing nations, conflict theorists believe that it is simplistic to view conflict only as hierarchical and class-based. They believe conflict between groups is also based on 'ethnic, cultural cleavages'. Conflict between rival ethnic, tribal or religious groups may be as common as conflict between hierarchical social classes in developing plural societies. <sup>12</sup>

The labour force is seen by conflict theorists as being segmented into a primary (white-collar managerial, professional) and a secondary (blue-collar labour) sector between which there is very little mobility. <sup>13</sup> By maintaining little real movement between these labour market sectors, and by denying members of other groups meaningful

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

access to avenues to power, the dominant group is able to maintain the status quo.

In all societies, one group controls the major resources and uses them to ensure the future ongoing control by their offspring. As a consequence, the other group or groups in society are largely denied genuine access to resources such as education which will allow them to become part of, or share power with the ruling class. To maintain a facade of justice the ruling class convinces the members of other classes or groups, that they alone possess the skills and competency which are necessary in order to hold such responsible and demanding positions. They explain that all members of society have an equal opportunity to gain the credentials which will allow them into positions of power and status in society, and they hold up the few who have battled against the odds and succeeded in gaining entry to powerful positions. So while education is seen as the route by which it is possible to gain entry to positions of wealth and power, it is essentially controlled by the dominant group.

Conflict extends further than within societies, and can be observed between nations. Conflict theorists see the relationship between developing nations and modern industrial nations as one of conflict. The recent forms of interaction which exist between western nations and ex-colonies, are seen as manifestations of colonialism. Developing countries have spent considerable money and resources in order to provide their people with a western-style education system that they believe will release them from poverty. Encouraged by western

'experts' they have invested in foreign teaching staff, equipment, text books, and study programmes. They have often sent many of their brightest students abroad to Europe, or North America to train in the intellectual capitals. A major disparity exists between what educational services and support 'developed' nations are providing for 'underdeveloped' nations, and what they actually need in order to gain dignity and true independence as a nation. Conflict theorists see this as an unequal situation which almost entirely benefits the donor nation.

#### Dependency Theory.

Dependency theorists would explain this unequal relationship in terms of the exploitation of a 'third world' country by a 'first world' country. Colonising countries had initially set up a western-style system of education which often had little relevance to the locals. According to dependency theory, colonial education cannot play a truly liberating role in developing nations because it treats students as passive beings who can be 'simply changed from one role in a dependent system to a different role in the same system'.<sup>14</sup>

After independence these countries ensured through a programme of 'aid', that the education systems were not only retained, but very often extended; the dependence on foreign assistance extended correspondingly. In fact dependency increases because of the level of control the industrialised nations have over

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<sup>14</sup> Carnoy, Education as Cultural Imperialism, p. 57.

research institutes, publishing houses and educational facilities. <sup>15</sup>

### Neocolonial Theory.

Like the dependency theories, the inequalities between nations are central to a neocolonial analysis. Many developing nations are not in a position to decline foreign aid as they face such severe poverty that any assistance is gratefully received. <sup>16</sup> Paulo Freire believes that a nation does not choose to be economically exploited or culturally dominated. Developing nations are colonized into passive acceptance of that role. <sup>17</sup>

Developing nations, which have been the victims of colonialism in one form or another then, have experienced similar patterns of educational domination and exploitation at the hands of colonial and imperial powers. Having had an alien educational system, curriculum and purpose thrust upon them, as they have gained their independence, these countries have had to determine what form of education now suits their people. Many newly independent nations have decided that the existing form of education, though not indigenous in its style, is the only educational programme they can realistically operate. The educational ties that western, colonial countries manage to maintain, ensure that they are able to retain a significant level of influence over the developing countries, particularly their economic and educational programmes. This guarantees

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<sup>15</sup> Shavit, "Tracking and the Educational Spiral: Arab and Jewish Patterns of Educational Expansion." p. 470.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 471.

<sup>17</sup> Carnoy, Education as Cultural Imperialism, p. 19.



that the 'first world' perpetuates its powerful position in the unequal relationship it has with the 'third world'.

## ii. The Special Significance of Education

An important aspect of the issue of education in Israel and the Occupied Territories is the strong relationship that both the Jewish people and the Palestinians have with education. Historically, the Jewish community has long valued education as a resource which has served and indeed saved their people. The Jewish people have an age-old reputation as shrewd businessmen and intellectuals. While it is never absolutely accurate to generalize about such a group of people, the Jews have very often made up a large percentage of the professional people in the societies they lived in. As a minority group which has been persecuted and tormented in many parts of the world, the Jews developed and then relied on their mental skills by making themselves indispensable. Whether they were in fact despised because of their professional abilities, (which led many Jews to become quite wealthy) or whether they developed these skills in order to have a portable resource that could be passed through the generations is not clear. What is clear is how highly they valued education, and how well they were able to use it.

### Zionist View of Education.

Traditionally, the Jewish people have viewed education as a central part of their lives. The Zionist leaders understood the importance of education in attracting Jews from all over the world to Palestine. The first Jewish secondary school to be established in Palestine was the Herzlia Gymnasia in Jaffa (1905). It was not expected to be popular with the Jews in

Europe because many thought that it would not meet European schooling standards, but the concept of an exclusively Jewish school in the historical Holy Land proved to be immensely popular. By 1913, there were more than 500 children of Zionist families attending the Hebrew school and half of these children were from abroad. <sup>18</sup>

The Zionist plan to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine meant that it had to begin to build a strong base amongst the existing Jewish population, and to attract as much international interest from Jews as possible. Education played a major role in this programme. Zionist leaders saw education as a means by which they could establish a 'new type of Israeli' from the arriving immigrants; Israelis who felt strongly bound to the state of Israel and its future survival. <sup>19</sup>

After independence, the objectives of state education, as outlined in the Education Law of 1953, sought to base elementary education on the values of Jewish culture and loyalty to the Jewish state. Jewish education strove towards achievement in science, agriculture and pioneer training. The Education Law specifies "... striving for a society built on freedom, equality, tolerance, mutual assistance, and love of

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<sup>18</sup> J.S. Bentwich, Education in Israel, (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 11.

<sup>19</sup> E. Ignas, R.J. Corsini, and Contributors, Comparative Educational Systems, (Illinois, F.E. Peacock Publishers Inc., 1981), p. 188.

mankind." 20 This thesis will demonstrate that this emphasis on 'freedom' and 'equality' has not been extended to the Palestinian community. It seems that there cannot be an equal place for Arabs in this vision of state education.

### Recent Educational History of Palestine.

In many ways the recent educational history of the Palestinians has been similar to that of the Jews. For the past 500 years, foreigners have been in control of the education of the Palestinian people. When the British first took military control of Palestine in 1917, they barely changed the existing government education system, which the Turks had modelled on the French education system. They changed the language of instruction from Turkish to Arabic, but had little interest in providing a more appropriate education for the Palestinians. 21 These government schools were for the Moslem population. The Christian community maintained their own mission or church schools. The British found the Palestinians to be very enthusiastic about education. The High Commissioner Lord Samuel, wrote in his report of the administration of Palestine (1920-1925) that

the Arabs, a quick-witted people, are beginning to recognize how much they are handicapped by illiteracy. Not only in the town, but in many of the villages as well, they are eager for the opening of schools, and

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20 J.S. Frey, and S. H. Fisher, Israel: A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, World Education Series, (1976), p. 9.

21 Bentwich, Education in Israel, p. 18.

display their eagerness by subscribing voluntarily considerable sums of money for their establishment. <sup>22</sup>

The small Jewish community had private schools of their own which they ran autonomously. When the mandate officially began in 1922, the Zionist leaders demanded that Jewish education received equal government assistance. This is how the separate Jewish and Arab educational systems which continue to operate today were established.

Despite the enthusiasm of the Palestinians, by 1945 Arab education was lagging far behind Jewish education. In 1944-45, the Arabs (with a total population of one million) had 71 662 pupils in public schools. They were staffed by 1 871 teachers in 478 schools and received British government spending of 409 000 pounds. In comparison, the Jews (whose population was half a million) had 77 968 students in 573 schools, taught by 3 783 teachers. Their education budget was 1 487 563 pounds, of which the British government provided ten percent. <sup>23</sup>

Arab primary education had been significantly expanded during the British mandate, but secondary and higher education were severely neglected. By 1944, there were only 959 secondary school students, with no secondary schools in rural areas and the only university in the country was the Hebrew University, which was established in 1925 to serve the Jewish community exclusively. <sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> S. N. Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza: A Critical Assessment, (London, KPI Ltd., 1986), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 150.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

### The Colonial Nature of Palestinian Education.

The nature of education for the Arab population under the mandate was culturally inappropriate. The British superimposed their form of education directly onto the existing educational structures, regarding schools as 'a vocation and mission of spreading Western civilization'.<sup>25</sup>

In 1948 the Gaza Strip fell under the authority of Egypt and in 1950 Jordan assumed responsibility for the education of the children of the West Bank.<sup>26</sup> While the educational systems of the Palestinians' Arab neighbours were more culturally appropriate, they were still influenced by 'foreign' institutions.

### The Palestinian View of Education.

As an occupied people, Palestinians looked to education to provide the skills, resources and understanding needed to free themselves. Education has proven to be a means of survival and insurance against future uncertainties, for Palestinians. Because education is a 'portable, transferable commodity' it is especially valuable for an uprooted and transient community.<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Hallaj points to two major reasons why Palestinians saw education as their means of hope and survival. Firstly, as a mainly rural agrarian population, the

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<sup>25</sup> Ignas, Comparative Educational Systems, p. 191.

<sup>26</sup> "Education During the Intifada." Educational Network, No. 1, (June 1990), p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> P. E. Davies, "The Educated West Bank Palestinians." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. VIII, No. 3, (Spring 1979), p. 65.

loss of their land forced them to seek more reliable ways to earn a living. Education and vocational training suit the needs of displaced people; it is a commodity which cannot be destroyed or confiscated, but which is transferable. Secondly, the Palestinians saw the superior technology of the Israelis as a significant factor in their loss of the land. This understanding of the potential value of education and technology, inspired them to improve their own skills. 28 Hallaj's ideas support my argument that the Palestinians consciously decided to use education to improve their people's situation.

While the education systems they operate under are not run by autonomous Palestinian institutions, the Palestinians are determined to do the best they can under the circumstances. Palestinian children are passionate about education. They see education as their chance to learn the skills to build a free future. Children particularly in the Occupied Territories know how advantageous a good education is in terms of social mobility and financial reward. Statistics show that university graduates in the West Bank earn 300 percent more than those without a university education. 29 This improves their social mobility and standard of living, and encourages young Palestinians to attend university.

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28 M. Hallaj, "The Mission of Palestinian Higher Education." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. IX, No. 4, (Summer 1980), p. 77-78.

29 Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 150.

One principal says that "If you happen to visit any refugee camp or any other area where Palestinians reside, you will see even a Palestinian child so enthusiastic ... to start his education from his elementary cycle until hopefully reaching his university stage." <sup>30</sup> This passion for education has been fostered in many Palestinians whether they have been forced to live outside their homeland, or whether they live inside it under Israeli control.

#### Palestinian Educational Achievements.

Due mainly to the enthusiasm of the Palestinian people for education, they have achieved impressive educational results, particularly at the university level. They have recently put great emphasis on developing autonomous Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories. The number of Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories is about half that of the number of Egyptian universities; Egypt has approximately forty times the population of the Occupied Territories. <sup>31</sup> Palestinian university students represent about 11 for each 1 000 of the Palestinian population, a figure reached only in Lebanon among the Arab countries. In comparison, university student /total population ratios in other countries are 5.7 / 1 000 in Egypt, 30 / 1 000 in the U.S. and 8 / 1 000 in England. <sup>32</sup> These figures are all the more remarkable when one recalls that prior to 1948, post-

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<sup>30</sup> Video "Palestinian Refugee Education." UNWRA.

<sup>31</sup> Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza; A Critical Assessment, p. 22.

<sup>32</sup> Davies, "The Educated West Bank Palestinians." p. 65.



secondary education was virtually non-existent. Palestinians had to travel abroad to continue their education, and this was a luxury most could not afford.

Many Palestinians who were forced to flee from Palestine in the war, found themselves living as refugees in neighbouring Arab countries which gave them access to educational facilities. Students who were unable to attend university in Palestine, were able to attend universities in these host countries. For the younger students growing up in poverty in refugee camps in Syria, Jordan or Lebanon, education was seen as their ticket out of the poverty. For Palestinians dealing with the monotony and poverty of the refugee camps, schools generated hope for a better future. <sup>33</sup>

Palestinians who have become scattered around the world, have excelled in educational pursuits. There are several reasons for this superior showing among Palestinians. Education provided financial and psychological security for the Palestinians who found themselves in circumstances of political instability. Education, especially for refugees, is seen as an opportunity for an improvement in economic conditions, particularly in areas where the employment prospects are very poor. Palestinians are often looked down upon in the host countries because of their refugee status which spurs them to aspire to success via educational achievements. That they were overwhelmed by the Jews who have an international reputation for high levels of education and

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<sup>33</sup> S. Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, (London, World University Service, 1984), p. 25.

training, has led the Palestinians to seek further learning. Yusuf adds to this discussion by pointing out that external assistance was a significant factor in the achievement of high educational standards. The Palestinians had become concentrated largely in the wealthier, better educated countries, which were able to provide free education to the Palestinians. Also, the United Nations, through UNRWA has provided free education to vast numbers of even the poorest refugees. <sup>34</sup>

Ibrahim Abu-Lughod ascribes the 'unusual development' of education among Palestinians to four major factors:

the expansion of educational facilities in the host countries, from which Palestinians also benefited; the Palestinian's shift as refugees, from a rural setting to an urban one, offering more educational opportunities; the loss of their traditional institutions and way of life which has meant that many Palestinians see education as an avenue for social and economic mobility; and the shortage of work opportunities reducing the tendency for children to drop out of school. <sup>35</sup>

Abu-Lughod adds to our understanding of the way Palestinians have adapted to their changing circumstances. They have attempted to make the best progress they could, by taking advantage of the opportunities available to them. The statistics demonstrating the high level of Palestinian education serve as a testimony to their commitment to education as a way of strengthening their skills and

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<sup>34</sup> M.D. Yusuf, "The Potential Impact of Palestinian Education on a Palestinian State." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. VIII, No. 4, (Summer 1979), p. 77.

<sup>35</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 30.

understanding. However to get a truer picture of Palestinian educational achievement, we should draw comparisons between their successes and the educational achievements of the Jewish citizens of Israel.

#### The Educational Performance of Jewish and Arab Students.

Palestinian educational performances do not appear so successful when compared with the achievements of Jewish students. For example, my research into higher education in Israel, shows that in 1972-73 the proportion of Arab university students was two percent of an estimated total of 44 326 university students attending the four major Israeli universities. As the Arab population in Israel at this time represented 15 percent of the total population, we can see what a low proportion this is. <sup>36</sup> Why then, we must ask are the Arab citizens of Israel so far behind their Jewish compatriots?

#### The Unequal Treatment of Arab Students.

If we assess the Israeli educational policy for the Palestinian population, we are able to appreciate why the Arab education sector is inferior to the Jewish education sector inside Israel, and why the education of Arabs under occupation is so inadequate. It is clearly in the Israelis' best interests to keep the Palestinians undereducated. As internal colonizers of Palestine, the Israeli authorities want to establish Jewish supremacy in Israel. Since the establishment

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<sup>36</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 149.

of the Jewish state, the Israeli government has instituted a broad range of policies to ensure the permanent economic, educational, social and political superiority of the Jewish people over the Arabs. This includes a policy of promoting the educational opportunities of Jewish students and providing only minimal educational opportunities for Arab pupils. Although the Education Act of 1953 promises Palestinians 'equality, freedom and tolerance', they in fact were treated with mistrust and deliberate educational neglect. Nadim Rouhana cites the following as essential policies that the Israelis use to deal with the Palestinians:

Harnessing Arab resources such as land and labour, to the benefit of the Jewish population; excluding Arabs from national goals, projects and many institutions; attempting to prevent the development of national leadership, organisations and institutions; open discrimination, anchored in the law...; and unequal distribution of resources and services. <sup>37</sup>

This description of the general policies which Israel has instituted for dealing with Arab residents provides us with a clear picture of the unequal treatment the Palestinian community receives as a minority group in Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Israeli educationalists like Bentwich argue that even in a well-established state, and at peace with its neighbours, the education of a minority group is always difficult. In Israel which is surrounded by hostile Arab states with which the

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<sup>37</sup> N. Rouhana, "The Political Transformation of the Palestinians in Israel: From Acquiescence to Challenge." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, (Spring 1989), p. 39.

Arabs in Israel ally themselves, the task is especially difficult. Bentwich makes a valid point. It is understandable that the Israeli authorities are fearful and mistrustful of the Arab population, who openly associate themselves with the people who are enemies of the Israeli state. Bentwich claims that regardless of this fact, the Israelis have done a great deal for the education of Arab children in Israel. <sup>38</sup> The Israelis suggest that the statistics demonstrating the high standard of Palestinian educational achievement reflects their commitment to Palestinian education. It seems however, that although the Palestinians have received minimal Israeli government support, the Palestinians have done well in spite of the Israeli authorities.

#### An Assessment of the Liberating Potential of Education.

Although many educational experts look to education to significantly aid the Palestinians, and applaud their advances and achievements, one must question to what degree education alone can free the Palestinians from their enforced exile, or life under occupation. Education has gained a reputation as a liberating symbol for the Palestinians. While education has offered a ray of hope to the Palestinian community, it has not altered their status as refugees, nor has it dramatically improved their socio-economic position. <sup>39</sup> Indeed education has created a great dilemma in many young Palestinian's lives. Because the Israeli state has manipulated their educational

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<sup>38</sup> Bentwich, Education in Israel, p. 170.

<sup>39</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 20.

options and employment opportunities within Israel and the Occupied Territories, many Palestinians have faced difficult decisions. On the one hand, they are very tempted to choose to study subjects such as medicine, engineering and commerce, which will lead them to well-paying jobs in Europe, America or the Arab countries. On the other hand, they are instilled with a national interest which encourages them to remain at home and use their skills and training in the struggle for the revolutionary goal of self-determination and independent nationhood. Education for the Palestinians then, is a many-edged sword offering many hope for a better future, binding many to the Israeli state, and frustrating many who, with educational certificates in hand, are unable to realise their goals.

### iii. Education Under Occupation

#### The Structure of the Israeli Education System.

Education is the third largest item on the Israeli national budget behind military and housing expenditure. <sup>40</sup> Most of the education budget is absorbed by the primary schools. State and state-religious primary schools are jointly financed by the government and the local authorities. Teachers in these schools have been paid by the Ministry of Education and Culture since 1953. <sup>41</sup> The Ministry of Education and Culture shares responsibility for primary school funding with local authorities but has sole responsibility for matters of educational policy.

The Ministry is responsible for planning and supervision of curriculums; instruction and various school activities; financing of schools and universities; administration of examinations and research; financing and supervision of extracurricular activities; and the study, inspection, and preservation of historical sites.  
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In Israel students wishing to continue their education past the age of fourteen (the age of compulsory attendance) are no longer entitled to free education. Either their families must pay the school fees, or they may be among the 56 percent of secondary school students who are subsidized either by the government or by their local authority. <sup>43</sup> These subsidies are

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<sup>40</sup> Frey and Fisher, Israel; A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, p. 6.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

usually in the form of scholarships for able students whose families are unable to afford the fees. Parents choose which school they would like their child to attend, and the majority choose to send their children to state schools. 44

The Ministry of Education and Culture provides more than 60 percent of the funds for higher education in Israel. Student fees, local authorities and voluntary agencies provide the remaining funds required to run Israel's seven universities. 45 Israel's universities are autonomous institutions which are principally run by their boards of governors, which often include non-Israeli academics. The board of governors sets budgets, determines which faculties will be established, and appoints senior university officials. An academic senate is the senior academic authority of each university. It is responsible for academic standards, policy, and hiring staff. The Ministry is not directly involved in the operation of the universities.

#### The Educational Segregation Policy in Israel.

In Israel a separate educational structure exists for Arab students; very few Arabs study in Jewish schools. In Jewish schools students are instructed in Hebrew; Arabic is the language of instruction in Arab schools. The Arabic language is optional in Jewish schools, whereas Hebrew is compulsory for Arab students from the third grade. 46 There are other

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44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.



important differences between Jewish and Arab schools which will be discussed shortly. The policy of formal separation of Arabs and Jews is compounded by the existence of a Department of Arab Education, which has always been headed by a Jew. Arab teachers also have a separate section within Israel's Teachers' Union. This form of segregation highlights and indeed maintains the minority status of Arabs in Israel. 47

The government sanction of separate institutions for Israeli Jews and Arabs raises some serious questions. For example, does the Israeli government have a policy of delivering an inferior education to Israeli Arabs? Are Arabs and Jews to be provided with quite different employment opportunities? Is it the express intention of the Israeli government that Arabs and Jews have as little contact on an equal level as possible? The first two questions will be addressed shortly. In response to the last question, there is a scholarly opinion which would accept this proposition, and I believe that to suggest it was a direct policy initiative would not be overstating the point. Social contact between Jews and Arabs is limited, and a segregated educational system would certainly indicate an official desire to maintain this division long-term. That the educational facilities are not only separate but unequal indicates further that the intention may be to entrench ethnic and class divisions in Israeli society. 48

#### The Education of Arabs in Israel.

<sup>47</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

For Arabs living within Israel's borders, education has been a bitter-sweet experience. On the one hand, Arab access to education has been widely extended. Since Israel's independence, while the general population has tripled, the Palestinian school population has multiplied over thirteen times.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, however, the quality of education which Palestinian citizens of Israel receive is significantly lower than that provided for the Jewish citizens of Israel.

Israel has attempted to gain political mileage out of the statistics regarding levels of Arab education since 1967. The great increase in Arab school enrolments since 1967 is frequently heralded as a sign of the even-handed nature of the Israeli government and as evidence that the Palestinians are 'better off' living in a Jewish state. However, statistics which indicate that between the late 1950s and the late 1970s the number of secondary schools in the 'Arab sector' rose from less than ten, to in excess of fifty must be viewed with caution.<sup>50</sup> One should not assume that these schools were provided by the Israelis, or even that they were built with Israeli approval, for in fact almost without exception, they were built by local initiative and were often financed without government support.<sup>51</sup> Indeed the Israeli government has always been concerned about the level of education which Arabs

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<sup>49</sup> E. Ignas, R.J. Corsini, and contributors, Comparative Educational Systems, p. 226.

<sup>50</sup> H. Amun, U. Davis, N.D. Sanallah, A.A. Elrazik, and R. Amin, Palestinian Arabs in Israel; Two Case Studies, p. 94-95.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

should receive. The unease felt over educating the Arabs of Israel partly concerned the notion that an educated Arab population would be more difficult to control. Uri Lubrani, former adviser to the Minister of Arab Affairs, stated that "If there were no pupils the situation would be better and more stable. If the Arabs remained hewers of wood it might be easier for us to control them. But there are certain things that are beyond our control. This is unavoidable." <sup>52</sup> One aspect of this control was ensuring that the Arabs remained politically inactive.

Israel Koenig, author of the 'Koenig Report' - a proposal for the handling of Israeli Arabs - wrote that a "population with an education, even if it is a superficial and provincial one, constitutes the active part of every chauvinistic movement..."

<sup>53</sup> Koenig proposed to keep the Palestinians 'in line' by taking a harsh line against any agitators, making it easy for Arabs to study abroad and difficult for them to come back into Israel, and by directing Arab students into subjects which have a high failure rate and which leave little time for nationalistic thoughts. <sup>54</sup>

Let us now examine how Israeli policies regarding Arab education have been implemented. The total government spending on Arab education is much lower than spending on Jewish

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

education.<sup>55</sup> At all levels of education, Arab students are disadvantaged. There is no state provision for Arab pre-school education; consequently only two percent of Arab children attend kindergartens. Conversely, 67 percent of Jewish children are sent to kindergarten.<sup>56</sup> This means that Arab children receive little formal preparation for school. At the primary school level, Palestinian children suffer several major disadvantages. They have inadequate resources and facilities. It is estimated that as many as 5000 more classrooms are required. Many classes are currently taught in rented rooms as existing classrooms are overcrowded, lacking in resources and often unsanitary. This lack of facilities has meant that the Israeli authorities' decision to make the ninth schooling year compulsory, has had to be abandoned in the Arab sector.<sup>57</sup> In addition to the lack of classrooms, Arab schools are also in need of 5 000 additional teachers.<sup>58</sup> Another example of the inferior state of Arab education is in the number and quality of teachers. In secondary schools, student-teacher ratios are 18:1 and 11:1 for Arab and Jewish students respectively.<sup>59</sup> In primary schools in 1975 over half of all teachers in Arab schools were not certified to

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<sup>55</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel; A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> PLO Background Briefing, Vol. II, No. 20, (August 1989), p. 16.

<sup>57</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression, and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 47.

<sup>58</sup> PLO Background Briefing, p. 16.

<sup>59</sup> Shavit, "Tracking and the Educational Spiral: Arab and Jewish Patterns of Educational Expansion." p. 221.

teach, in comparison, only 15 percent of teachers in Jewish schools were unqualified.<sup>60</sup> These statistics typify the lack of concern the government shows for standards in Arab education.

#### The Arab Curriculum.

The other major area of concern for Palestinian students is their curriculum. Jewish and Arab schools share the same basic curriculum. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and related activities are studied in the first two grades. Subsequent grades concentrate on geography, history, science, art and music, languages, physical training, agriculture, home economics, and social education.<sup>61</sup> That the curricula are very similar in terms of history, culture and literature, is of real concern to Palestinian educators. While Jewish students are not required to study Palestinian culture, history or language<sup>62</sup>, Arabs students are compelled to learn the history of Zionism, Jewish culture and Hebrew. This is a clear example of inappropriate, colonial education. The negative aspects of Arab history are promoted; lessons stress the violent aspects of Arab behaviour.<sup>63</sup> The Arab students are taught that their culture, history, literature, customs and traditions are of secondary importance to those of the Jewish

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Frey and Fisher, A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, p. 9.

<sup>62</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 157.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

people. It would be unique in terms of colonial education for the Israeli authorities to actively promote nationalistic pride in their Arab population, however providing a debased image of Arab history and culture may have an unexpected result. This policy may in fact create more staunchly nationalistic students than had the Israelis provided a more truthful, unbiased curriculum.

A second aspect of the Arab curriculum which is disturbing is the lack of vocational subjects provided. In 1980-81, more than half of the Jewish students were learning some vocational subjects, whereas only 16 percent of Palestinian students were.<sup>64</sup> The Israelis systematically block Palestinian students from access to technical knowledge and skills. This has tremendous repercussions on the opportunities Arabs have to attain skilled jobs. This is a pattern which is repeated in higher education in Israel. At this level there are relatively few openings for Palestinians. In particular they are denied access to technical knowledge. The Israeli authorities have established a higher education entry policy which discriminates against Palestinian students. Arab students are denied places in many academic fields (such as engineering, medicine, and the applied sciences). The Israelis claim they must limit class sizes because of limited laboratory facilities. Palestinians interpret this policy as a deliberate

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<sup>64</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation; Palestinians, p. 50.

ploy to block their access to high paying occupations, and to keep them relatively unskilled. <sup>65</sup>

As a result, Palestinians attend university in Israel. Only 3.3 percent of all university students who enrolled in 1978-79 were 'non-Jews'. <sup>66</sup> Because of discrimination Palestinian students do not perform well at universities in Israel; in fact their counterparts in the Occupied Territories perform better at this level. <sup>67</sup> One reason is that it is difficult for them to adjust to being instructed in Hebrew, after twelve years of learning in Arabic. Another reason for their poor performance at university level is their inadequate preparation at secondary school. Furthermore, Israeli inflation levels have led to an increase in fees, which puts university education financially out of the reach of most Palestinians.

The terrible state of Arab education in Israel is a direct result of Israel's policies of 'systematic discrimination, oppression and cultural impoverishment' against the Arab community in Israel. <sup>68</sup> The educational crisis faced by Israeli Arabs is a scenario which we find duplicated to a large degree in the Occupied Territories.

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<sup>65</sup> Frey and Fisher, A Guide to the American Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, p. 94.

<sup>66</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 56.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Amun et al., Palestinian Arabs in Israel; Two Case Studies p. 96.

### The Education of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

When Israel took over management of the Palestinian schools in the territories they claimed in 1967, they made few changes. The West Bank students continue to use the Jordanian curriculum, and the Gaza Strip students, the Egyptian curriculum. East Jerusalem students who attend government schools are taught the Israeli curriculum. The Israeli authorities replaced any text books that were pro-Arab, or anti-Zionist, with Israeli texts. Palestinians initially refused to attend schools run by the Israelis, but within a year, settled into regular school attendance. <sup>69</sup>

The educational structure in the Occupied Territories consists of six years primary (ages 6-11), three years preparatory (ages 12-14), and three years secondary (ages 15-17). <sup>70</sup> There are three types of schools in operation in the Occupied Territories; government schools, schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and private schools. In the West Bank, 78 percent of students attend government schools, 10 percent attend UNRWA schools and 12 percent attend private schools. In the Gaza Strip, 51 percent of students attend UNRWA schools and 49 percent attend government schools. <sup>71</sup>

Private schools offer the best quality education for Palestinians, and in East Jerusalem private schools are not

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<sup>69</sup> Frey and Fisher, A Guide to the American Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>71</sup> "Education During the Intifada." Educational Network, p. 2.



obliged to teach the Israeli curriculum. This makes these schools particularly desirable, and attracts substantial donations from Palestinians both locally and from abroad. Private schools are funded by tuition fees and donations and are run by various local and foreign institutions; mainly religious organizations. These schools enjoy less restrictions than UNRWA and government schools and while they are obliged to use the official curriculum, they can sometimes offer extra courses. <sup>72</sup> While Palestinians are mistrustful of Israeli authorities and would prefer to send their children to private schools, there are several reasons which render their desire impractical. The fees are generally too high for ordinary Palestinians to manage. The private schools are subject to Israeli taxes which drain their financial resources and limit their ability to drop tuition fees, or to expand their services. The Israeli military authorities have also been known to restrict the expansion of private schools by denying requests for new facilities. <sup>73</sup>

UNRWA schools were established in the 1950s under the auspices of UNRWA and UNESCO. UNRWA was intended to have a temporary role until the refugees were returned home. UNRWA is now responsible for over two million Palestinians. It operates over 650 primary schools as well as eight vocational and training centres. UNRWA plays an extremely important role in the Gaza Strip because of the large number of refugees who

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Frey and Fisher, A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from Israel in Educational Institutions of the United States, p. 93.

live there. UNRWA schools are only able to offer elementary and preparatory education and students who wish to continue their education must then join a government school. UNRWA schools are generally better than government schools because the teachers receive regular supervision as well as continuous training and follow up from UNESCO. <sup>74</sup>

Government schools are totally funded and controlled by the Israeli military authorities. Government schools in the West Bank are operated by the Office of Educational Affairs, and are under Israeli military control. This Office grants licenses to and supervises the curricula and textbooks of private schools. <sup>75</sup> The government schools in the Occupied Territories share many of the same shortcomings as those in Israel's Arab sector. It is generally agreed that educational standards are lower in government schools in the Occupied Territories, than in UNRWA and private schools. <sup>76</sup> Israeli authorities are reluctant to employ qualified teachers; they underpay staff which results in their inability to retain well qualified teachers. Aside from poor teaching standards, government schools also use outdated books, have poorly equipped or no laboratories and overcrowded classrooms. Government school teachers and students come under scrutiny

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<sup>74</sup> "Education During the Intifada." Educational Network, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> Social, Economic and Political Institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, (New York, United Nations, 1982), p. 10-11.

<sup>76</sup> "Education During the Intifada." Educational Network, p. 2.

regularly from the military, and are closed often by the army.  
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The plans and goals of the local Palestinian educators, are seldom in keeping with government 'experts' who have a very different set of objectives for Arab schools. The recent souring of relations with Jordan has highlighted for West Bank educators how dependent they are on foreign control of their children's education. Even their imperfect ties with Arab curriculum and style of education have been severed leaving them feeling vulnerable. One West Bank educator expressed this concern:

Theoretically we are following the Jordanian education system - we have the same books as them. But now it's become a problem because we are no longer affiliated with the Jordanians and now of course we can't develop our own system of education because we still don't have a state, or even an education cabinet or office. 78

#### Palestinian Universities in the Occupied Territories.

One of the most important recent educational developments since 1967 has been the birth and relatively rapid expansion of Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories. Prior to 1967, the Palestinian community was without its own centres for higher learning in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, now there are six major universities and fourteen community colleges. They enrol approximately 5 000 of the more than 13 000 high school students who pass the matriculation examination (tawjihi) each year. The three largest universities (Bir Zeit

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77 J. Kuttub, "The Children's Revolt." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 4, (Summer 1988), p. 15.

78 Confidential Interview.

near Ramallah, Al Najah University in Nablus and Bethlehem University) have developed a curriculum similar to a small American college. <sup>79</sup>

These universities were all formerly schools which extended their programmes to eventually gain membership of the International Associations of Universities. That these universities were not founded until the late 1970s and early 1980s, has been used by the Israelis to show the international community how benevolent they are. In fact there were several reasons motivating the Israeli authorities' decision to permit the establishment of independent Palestinian higher educational institutions in the Occupied Territories; benevolence was not among them.

The Israelis were afraid that if they did not make higher education available to the Palestinians, there might be considerable frustration and outrage, leading to widespread civil unrest. <sup>80</sup> With the expansion in secondary education, there were now large numbers of students graduating from high school each year, many of them unable to pay for a university education abroad. The authorities were concerned not to alienate these youths. The Israelis were confident that in terms of security, it would be easier for their intelligence agents to monitor the movements, associations and plans of

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<sup>79</sup> Education Under Occupation, Vol. I, No. 1, (The Palestinian University, Spring 1986), p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> A.T. Sullivan, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." Cairo Papers in Social Science, Vol. II, Monograph 2, (Summer 1988), p. 2-3.

student leaders from inside the Occupied Territories than from without. At the time, the Israelis were very concerned about Palestinians studying in the Soviet Union. Many poorer students who could not afford a western university education were attending Soviet universities and the Israelis were very suspicious of the potential revolutionary repercussions of the links and contacts that students might be forming. The Israelis were also confident that if they permitted the establishment of Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories, this would encourage Arab migration. They reasoned that it was not likely that graduates would find sufficient appropriate employment in the Occupied Territories. This fact may, they hoped lead them overseas in search of employment opportunities.<sup>81</sup> Added to this was the Israeli belief that independent Palestinian universities would not be on par with the intellectual standards of Israel and the west. They reasoned that because of this, the Palestinians would not pose any substantial threat to the Israel's technological and scientific superiority.<sup>82</sup> The Israelis no doubt understood the value that Palestinian society places on academic as opposed to vocational and technical knowledge and were confident that the Palestinian universities would follow on from Arab high schools with a strong academic emphasis on the humanities and social sciences. So although the Israeli military authorities were well aware that the universities are very patriotic institutions, and know of their reputation as

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<sup>81</sup> S. N. Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza: A Critical Assessment, p. 10.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

breeding grounds for nationalism, they were confident that permitting the establishment of independent Palestinian universities would be in their best interests.

The Palestinian community had not established universities prior to the occupation because their students were free to travel to and enrol in neighbouring Arab universities which were of a good standard. Primarily, Palestinian students attended Egyptian, Lebanese and Jordanian universities, but others travelled to the west - to the United States and Europe for their higher education. With the advent of the Israeli occupation of their lands in 1967, continued access to these foreign universities was threatened. Israeli authorities made it increasingly difficult for students to travel in and out of the Occupied Territories for short periods of time. Absences longer than one year jeopardized Palestinian's identity cards.

<sup>83</sup> With this loss of access to Arab universities the Palestinian community was compelled to develop their own institutions of higher education. Indeed, that the occupation led to the establishment of independent Palestinian universities was welcomed by the community who had begun to feel anxious about the lack of Palestinian institutions. This absence of independent Palestinian institutions has meant that the universities have come to hold a special place in Palestinian society.

#### The Special Status of Palestinian Universities.

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<sup>83</sup> Sullivan, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 1.

There are two major factors contributing to the symbolic status of the universities. Firstly, the Occupied Territories have no 'national' institutions to co-ordinate the employment and economic needs of the Palestinian community. Indeed, these needs have not been sufficiently researched. Although the universities are undoubtedly able to play a major role in this area, what is expected of them by the wider community is often unrealistic. Secondly, they are the only Palestinian institutions which are financed by Arabs. This has given them a degree of autonomy which is unique under military occupation. Because of this degree of autonomy, the universities are able to concentrate on issues of political and cultural concern to the Palestinians. <sup>84</sup>

So Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories play far more than an just an academic role in life under occupation. They are seen as centres of resistance, and symbols of survival. This perception has been heightened by the expressions of hostility between the military authorities and the universities, virtually since their establishment. (In Chapter Three, a detailed account of the relationship between the universities and the Israeli authorities will be presented).

Palestinian universities were built with 'a central mission' in mind. The generation who had grown up under occupation were to be educated in preparation for a responsible and leading role in the future society. Educators in the Occupied

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<sup>84</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 82.

Territories have been concerned about what sort of future would be in store for young Palestinians. They understood the need to determine the future of their own people, and to educate their young people to 'meet and shape that future'. <sup>85</sup>

Unfortunately it seems clear that while Palestinian university educators attempted to do the best they could under difficult and trying circumstances, the lack of centralised planning has meant that these questions could not be satisfactorily answered. The individual nature of the universities, caused by the lack of a centralised Palestinian educational authority, and the ad hoc nature in which the universities were established, had meant that the universities are not providing Palestinian students with the specific skills necessary to build a stronger Palestinian economy. The absence of an autonomous Arab authority in the Occupied Territories means that there is no body with a supervisory capacity to co-ordinate Palestinian higher education. The universities then, have largely developed in an independent way, without having to comply with a 'national' programme. <sup>86</sup>

Tahir claims that not only have the Palestinian universities not developed resources for the benefit of the Palestinian economy, but that they in effect have benefited the economy of Israel. <sup>87</sup> Although there may be some truth in this

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<sup>85</sup> Kuttab, "The Children's Revolt." p. 12.

<sup>86</sup> Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza: A Critical Assessment, p. 25-26.

<sup>87</sup> J.M. Tahir, "An Assessment of Palestinian Human Resources: Higher Education and Manpower." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XIV, No. 3, (Spring 1985), p. 37.



proposition, Palestinians need to continue putting emphasis on higher education, even if the channelling of human resources is currently less than desirable. So while West Bank educators are attempting now to establish academic standards and national educational planning through the Council of Education, the Israeli assessment that the universities would not threaten the superiority of the Israeli technological and scientific communities, has proven to have some accuracy.

#### Inadequate Employment Opportunities for Palestinians.

Both inside Israel and the Occupied Territories, Palestinians are receiving inadequate educational and employment opportunities. Palestinian community educators themselves must take partial responsibility for the lack of organised educational direction exercised at the university level. Although the universities have operated under extremely oppressive conditions, it seems that they do have some degree of control over the curriculum. The staff and planners of these institutions must see with hindsight where they neglected their responsibility. They are able to see the long-term effects that loosely structured and ad hoc course formats have had on the Palestinian job market and the economy generally. Most young Palestinians are now unable to find suitable employment in the Occupied Territories and are forced to become part of the enormous, hugely exploited migrant workforce that travels daily to Israel, either working legally or illegally. The skills Palestinians are learning in their schools and universities are not leading them to well paying professional jobs but equipping most of them instead for no

more than semi-skilled work in Israeli companies. In 1986 only 15 percent of West Bank students found employment in their professions. 88

While Arab educators must take a significant portion of the blame for this predicament, the Israeli military and civil authorities, play a major role in ensuring that Arabs receive an education appropriate for their future role as poorly-paid members of the lower echelon of the Israeli labour market. Inside Israel they ensure that very few Palestinians have access at university level to certain valued resources, and in the Occupied Territories they have blocked Palestinian efforts to establish facilities to provide technological skills in fields such as agriculture and engineering. That Palestinian citizens of Israel have been almost completely denied access to scientific, professional and academic employment in their country, is a manifestation of Israeli policies of discrimination. 89

#### Israeli Authorities Ensure Arab Education is Inadequate.

The Israelis have ensured the inferior nature of Arab education in a number of ways, some of which have been outlined. The military authorities in the Occupied Territories have blocked the establishment of new schools and universities and have prevented the expansion of existing ones, not as a

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<sup>88</sup> P. Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation, June to August 1986." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVI, No. 1, (Autumn 1986), P. 127.

<sup>89</sup> Amun et al., Palestinian Arabs in Israel: Two Case Studies, p. 67.

matter of systematic policy, but in an unpredictable way. <sup>90</sup> Palestinians have been denied access to their culture, their history and consequently their pride, by the Israeli policy which distorts and deletes references to Palestinian history, literature and culture. <sup>91</sup> Books used by Palestinians are carefully censored by officials, and thousands of books are banned from use in Arab schools and universities. Almost all books which refer to Palestine, or indeed Arab issues with any degree of sympathy are banned. Even the non-political poetry and literature of leading Palestinian writers is banned.

Schools have been periodically closed by the Israelis, either officially, or by use of road blocks. This results in valuable time needed to complete the curriculum being lost and students and teachers being disrupted in exam preparation. Palestinian students have been prevented one way or another, from studying the wide subject range which is available to Jewish students. In particular, Arab students have been denied access to technological and scientific skills and information. For 'security' reasons, Arab university students in Israel are prevented from enrolling in certain science faculties, (such as electronics and aeronautics). This policy of systematic discrimination, together with the regulated lack of scientific and technological employment for Palestinians, forces Arab students to enrol in the arts and humanities. <sup>92</sup> By pushing

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<sup>90</sup> "Palestinian Children in the Occupied Territories." (New York, United Nations, 1981), p. 8.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>92</sup> Zureik, The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism, p. 155.

Palestinian students towards the humanities and social science subjects which are highly valued in Arab society, the Israelis have largely managed to keep them out of key industries.

Students and teachers have been regularly victimised and harassed by the military and civil authorities. Senior students are regularly 'detained' for the duration of their final examinations. There were 34 cases of this in 1983 alone.

<sup>93</sup> Students and teachers are arrested or held in administrative detention without having committed any offence. An estimated 25 percent of Palestinians held in Israeli jails without trial are students. <sup>94</sup> Teachers who appear to be deviating from the official curriculum in any way, for example by mentioning Palestine, can be transferred to remote rural areas, fired from government teaching posts, arrested, or deported. There has developed a situation of mistrust within the Palestinian community. Teachers who fear for their well being and decide not to provoke Israeli attention by participating in so-called 'political activity' are often suspected of being government agents by parents.

The Israeli military has tried to assert control over Palestinian education in another way. In 1980, Israel announced Military Order 854 which gives the Israeli government control over curricula, the issuing of teaching

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<sup>93</sup> "Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank: A Penalty for the Future." Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man, (Nov. 1988), p. 295.

<sup>94</sup> "Summary of the Condition of Higher Education in the Israeli Occupied Territories." Special UNESCO Report on the Exercise of Academic Freedoms in the Occupied Arab Territories. (Nov. 1987), p. 2.

certificates, the selection and review of textbooks, and the licensing and supervision of educational institutions. <sup>95</sup> While this form of control had been in effect since 1967, the Military Order went on to assert that all students and teachers must receive a military permit before being allowed to teach or study. The order went on to demand that all foreign teachers (mostly Palestinian lecturers who are denied a West Bank Identification card by the Israelis) must sign a loyalty oath which reads:

I hereby declare that I am fully committed against indulging in any act and offering any assistance to the organization called the PLO or any other terrorist organization that is considered to be hostile to the state of Israel as indicated in the Act for the Prevention of Acts of Belligerence and Enemy Propaganda... such acts being in a direct or indirect nature. <sup>96</sup>

Fifty faculty members were forced to leave the West Bank for refusing to sign the pledge. A year and a half later, following strong local and international pressure and criticism, the pledge was modified to one which staff were willing to sign.

Finally, Israeli military authorities and settlers have resorted to the use of physical violence against Palestinian school and university students in an attempt to frighten them into submission and obedience. Israeli soldiers have tear-gassed, beaten and fired ammunition at Palestinians inside their school and university grounds. Settlers have attacked

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>96</sup> "Universities Under Occupation." (Illinois, North American Academics in Solidarity with Palestinian Universities, 1984), p. 5.

Palestinian educational institutions (including kindergartens) on at least thirty occasions in the last five years. Settlers have been known to set bombs, use firearms and grenades, vandalize and burn school property, and threaten, beat and abduct students from the school grounds. <sup>97</sup> This abuse of military might is detailed in more detail in Chapters Three and Four.

In conclusion, it is very clear that the Israeli civil and military authorities are pursuing a determined policy to keep the Arabs undereducated - educated only for semi-skilled labour and for docility. It has been estimated that inside Israel, about half of the Palestinian secondary school population do not complete their education because of the systematic official discrimination they are subjected to. <sup>98</sup> In the Occupied Territories, the unabashed abuse and harassment of all involved with Palestinian education is an accepted though despised part of life. The Israelis have gone to great lengths to keep the Palestinians undereducated. They have established a Jewish state, and the Arab inhabitants of their lands are not Jewish. They are unwelcome inhabitants in the land of Zion, and there is no substantial place for them in Israeli society. Most Jews in Israel do not want to share the significant positions of power and importance with non-Jews, <sup>99</sup> so why should they spend time, money and resources

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<sup>97</sup> Israeli Settler Violence in the Occupied Territories: 1980-1984, ( The Palestine Human Rights Campaign, 1985), p. 18-19.

<sup>98</sup> M. D. Yusuf, "The Potential Impact of Palestinian Education on a Palestinian State." p. 16.

<sup>99</sup> Rouhana, "The Political Transformation of the Palestinians in Israel: From Acquiescence to Challenge." p. 43.

educating Arabs for positions they are not intended for? The passion that the Palestinians have for education must frighten those in Israel who do not want to share wealth or power with the 'non-Jewish' population of Israel.

On the other hand, the Palestinian people have become famous for their fighting spirit and their unrelenting quest for freedom and self-determination. The Palestinians know that their destiny depends on their people being well-educated, having the resources and the skills necessary to build their own nation in the future. For this reason it seems very unlikely that the Palestinians will take any course of action other than fighting for their right to a free and worthwhile educational future for their children.

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## CHAPTER III

### ISRAEL'S 'IRON FIST' POLICY; 1967-87

#### i. Palestinian Life Under Military Occupation

##### The Occupation of the Territories.

The Six-Day war of June 1967 dramatically changed the map of Israel and the Palestinian's status within it. Israel gained control of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, and the Arab populations of those densely populated areas. In 1967 there were 820 000 Palestinians in the West Bank, 80 000 in East Jerusalem and 450 000 in Gaza. <sup>1</sup> These territories have been at the forefront of all political debate regarding the Palestine question since the Israelis took possession of these lands. There were five options open to the Israelis regarding the handling of these territories and their inhabitants; annexation, integration, partial withdrawal, major withdrawal, or total withdrawal. Annexation involved extending Israel's legal, judicial and administrative systems to the population of the territories and including them in 'Greater Israel'. Integration involved a de facto integration which essentially preserved the status quo and provided no real political solution for the future of the Arab inhabitants. Partial withdrawal would have meant retaining the lands considered necessary to ensure Israel's security, while returning the densely populated areas to Arab control. Major withdrawal

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<sup>1</sup> P. Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, (London, Bookmarks, 1989), p. 15.



would have involved trading most of the territories in exchange for peace, while retaining East Jerusalem and a narrow coastal strip. Finally those who advocated total withdrawal believed Israel should return to her pre-1967 borders and return the newly won territories to Arab control.

<sup>2</sup> It appears that more radical options did exist but that these were discussed only behind closed doors, because of their extreme nature. For example, General Aharon Yariv confirmed that Israeli leaders had seriously considered the option of expelling 700 000- 800 000 Palestinians. <sup>3</sup> The ruling Labour Alignment party was deeply divided on the issue, and eventually chose the integration option. It chose the vague policy which did not clearly specify the future of the territories, and maintained the status quo. <sup>4</sup>

The Arab population faced an uncertain future. Once the war had ended, the Israeli government began demolishing Arab houses and buildings, including large residential areas in Jerusalem's Old City. Many thousands of Palestinians lost their homes due to these actions. Israelis used a variety of strategies to rid the land of the Arab people, including outright expulsion, intimidation and psychological pressure. Those who did not leave were subjected to the regulations of a rigid military government. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Yishai and Sella, Israel the Peaceful Belligerent. 1967-79, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> Y. Sayigh, "Roots of the Intifada: Zionist Policy in Palestine." p. 196-7.

<sup>4</sup> Yishai and Sella, Israel the Peaceful Belligerent. 1967-79, p. 132.

The Israelis ensured that the Palestinian inhabitants of these territories remained passive and subservient, by ruling with such a heavy hand that they would become paralysed by fear. One of the major methods used by the Israelis to ensure the subservience of the Arab population was to make them economically dependent on Israel. The Israelis decided to integrate economically the Occupied Territories, but they stopped well short of annexation which would require them to provide the Palestinians with Israeli citizenship and political rights.

The Economic Relationship Between Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Economic integration between Israel and the Occupied Territories meant enormous economic benefits for Israel and economic dependence for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel gained a major trading partner which provided a market for Israeli exports, and a new source of cheap migrant labour. Palestinians in the Occupied Territories on the other hand were extraordinarily vulnerable: they had no political or economic institutions which could protect their local economy. Hence the relationship between Israel and the Occupied Territories "bears the characteristic traits of a 'developed' country that has penetrated an 'underdeveloped' one." <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> M. Adams, "Israel's Treatment of the Arabs in the Occupied Territories." p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> J. Metzger, M. Orth, and C. Sterzing, This Land is Our Land: The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 114.

Israel's economic relationship with the Occupied Territories benefits Israel and harms the Palestinians in the territories in many ways. The labour market has undertaken major changes since Israel decided to integrate the Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank into its economy. Palestinians provide a large pool of skilled and unskilled labourers, who are usually employed for very low wages. Israeli employers are able to select daily from the thousands of available illegal Palestinian workers, whenever they require extra labourers.

The local Palestinian economy has suffered tremendously because of this development. The economy of the Occupied Territories can now be described as a 'dormitory economy'.<sup>7</sup> By the early 1980s, 43 percent of the Palestinian labour force from the Occupied Territories worked in Israel.<sup>8</sup> They have no industrial rights; they are unable to join unions, and therefore, they can be dismissed without adequate warning or reason, they are not entitled to holiday pay or overtime rates, they have no job security, and they are unable to bargain for increased pay or improved working conditions. Palestinians working in Israel are employed in the lowest paying, most menial, often temporary or seasonal jobs which Israelis will not do. Because the wages in Israel are higher than the local Occupied Territories' economy is able to provide, many Palestinians have decided to accept whatever work is offered in Israel. Although working in Israel is

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>8</sup> Marshall, Intifada; Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 17.

regarded as preferable to remaining unemployed in the Occupied Territories, Palestinians working in Israel earn substantially less than Israeli workers. In 1987 the average income of an Israeli worker was ten times higher than a Gazan worker and four times higher than a West Bank worker.<sup>9</sup> By 1981 110 000 Palestinians were travelling daily to work in Israel.<sup>10</sup> As they are not permitted to remain in Israel over-night, many workers face hours of travelling each day; many others are unable to live with their families during the week as the distances to and fro work are too great to cover. These conditions are very similar to those faced by black South Africans.

Since 1967, the Occupied Territories have developed into a major market for Israeli goods. Before 1967, West Bank residents had excellent trade relations with Jordan, and Gazan residents with Egypt. Since the war however, Israel has enforced a number of regulations which have severely limited this trade; Israel has ensured that it is now the major trading partner of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. In 1985 and in 1986 Israeli goods made up a staggering 89.4 percent of the Occupied Territories' imports.<sup>11</sup> Palestinians pay high prices for imported goods either because the Israeli goods cost a great deal, or because of the high duty Israel puts on imported goods. Since 1967, Palestinians in the Occupied Territories also must pay to protect Israeli goods

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Shehadeh, "Occupier's Law and the Uprising." p. 32.

from foreign competition, whereas their own industry is unprotected. <sup>12</sup>

While Israeli access to the markets of the Occupied Territories is unrestricted, Palestinian access to Israeli markets is limited and highly regulated. Israeli officials require local Palestinian farmers and manufacturers to have a permit to export their goods to Israel in order to protect Israeli producers from 'outside' competition. As a result of these measures, the local Palestinian agricultural, building and commercial industries in the Occupied Territories, now suffer greatly from economic stagnation.

#### The Palestinian Agricultural Industry.

Agriculture has always been the primary production and employment industry for Palestinians. Due to Israeli manipulation, their agricultural industry has deteriorated very seriously. In 1968, 45 percent of the West Bank labour force was employed in agriculture. This figure had fallen to 26 percent by 1980. In Gaza in 1966 agriculture employed 33 percent of the labour force, but by 1985 only 18 percent remained working in this industry. <sup>13</sup> Israeli agricultural policy aims to integrate the agricultural industry of the Occupied Territories into their own. They allow the Palestinians to grow only those products which are labour-intensive and yield low profits. This ensures that the

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<sup>12</sup> Metzger et al., This Land is Our Land: The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> Marshall, Intifada; Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 143.

Palestinian industry cannot compete with the Israeli industry for local or international markets. <sup>14</sup>

Local farmers are defenceless against the high level of Israeli competition they are faced with in their own markets. Because the Palestinian's agricultural needs must remain subservient to Israel's needs, the Occupied Territories are unable to ensure that their own production and consumption needs are met.

#### Israel Drains Heavy Taxes from the Territories.

The Israeli economy also benefits from the large amounts of money it receives annually from the Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories. Since 1967, over \$800 000 000 in taxes have been taken from Palestinians working in Israel, which has not been redirected into the Occupied Territories. <sup>15</sup>

Approximately 40 percent of Palestinians' wages are taken by the Israeli government for taxes and services such as unemployment compensation and health care; none of these services are available to the workers despite the payments. <sup>16</sup> Also, in addition to taxes, \$800 000 000 goes back into Israel every year, as the Occupied Territories' balance of payment deficit in trade with Israel. <sup>17</sup> The Israeli government collects a substantial income from Palestinians who live in

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<sup>14</sup> Metzger et al., This Land is Our Land: The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 103-5.

<sup>15</sup> "Uprising in Palestine - The First Year." (Illinois, Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights, 1985), p. 174.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Gaza and the West Bank, but they do not spend the money they receive on the welfare of these people. Each year Israel spends \$1 350 per person in Israel and \$185 per person in the Occupied Territories. This \$185 includes 'keeping order' in the territories. <sup>18</sup> In fact, it seems that the taxes paid by the Palestinians are largely used to sustain the enormous military might of Israel. Israel has the highest defense budget in the world. Each year an average of 25.5 percent of the GNP is directed into defense expenditures. In comparison, under the Reagan administration the American administration spent approximately seven percent of the GNP on defense. <sup>19</sup>

#### Palestinian Scarce Resources.

In addition to the strict economic regulations the Israeli government has imposed on Palestinian producers and workers, the Israelis have ensured that the Palestinian economy is severely depressed and dependent by taking control of their land and water. These scarce resources are vitally important to the Palestinian population. For refugees who have had the vast majority of their land taken from them already, access to the little land and water reserves that are left available to them, is crucial to their survival and well-being. Israeli officials wasted no time in demonstrating that they would control these resources for the benefit of the Jewish population.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> E. Kaufman, "The Intifada and the Peace Camp in Israel: A Critical Introspective." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 4, (Summer 1988), p. 73.

Water is an extremely valuable natural resource in an arid country which relies heavily on agricultural production. Mekorot (the Israeli National Water Authority) took control of the water supplies of the Occupied Territories in 1967 and immediately, Israel began to pillage the water supplies of the West Bank and Gaza. Their water was pumped into neighbouring Israeli towns, cities and settlements, leaving the Palestinians severely short of water. Israel now uses 75 percent of the West Bank's water resources leaving only 25 percent for the Palestinian majority. West Bank Palestinians consume 124 cubic meters of water per capita compared with the Israeli consumption of 537 cubic meters. <sup>20</sup> Entire Arab communities have been forced to abandon their villages because the water crisis has destroyed their ability to farm the land. <sup>21</sup> New Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories are draining the Palestinians' water supplies to dangerously low levels. The Israelis permit the settlers to drill new wells to access water, but no Palestinian has been allowed to dig for water since 1967, even when the survival of their village depends on accessing more water. <sup>22</sup> This policy of restricting the Palestinians' use of their own water supplies has virtually crippled their crucial agricultural sector.

Between 1967 and 1987, Israel confiscated approximately 50 percent of the land of the West Bank and 33 percent of Gazan

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<sup>20</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



land from the Palestinians. <sup>23</sup> The Israeli government uses the land predominantly for large settlements for the vast numbers of Jewish immigrants - Israel's newest citizens. This is a very clear example of the continuing colonization of the land. Since 1967, 65 000 Jewish settlers have been housed on Palestinian land in the West Bank alone. <sup>24</sup> Israeli officials have mainly requisitioned the land 'for security reasons'. After 1979, new Israeli policy stipulated that 'uncultivated' or 'unregistered' land should automatically become the property of the state. <sup>25</sup> Although the Israeli government has passed its own legislation allowing this method of land confiscation, it is in fact illegal. The presence of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories directly violates international law. Article 49 of Geneva Convention IV states: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territories it occupies." <sup>26</sup> This explosion of Jewish settlements is very threatening to the Palestinian population. It is obvious that the occupation of their land is not seen by the Israelis as a temporary arrangement. The existence of Jewish houses and gardens (often built by Palestinian labourers) exposes the permanence of the

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<sup>23</sup> "Colonial Pursuits; Settler Violence During the Uprising in the Occupied Territories." (Illinois, A Special Report of the Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights, 1989), p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Marshall, Intifada; Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> "Colonial Pursuits; Settler Violence During the Uprising in the Occupied Territories." p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> R.B Ashmore, "Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation: A Human Rights Analysis." Occasional Paper No. 2, (North American Academics in Solidarity with Palestinian Universities, 1986), p. 11.

Israeli presence in Gaza and the West Bank. The Israelis are very clearly not building these settlements with temporary residence in mind. The settlements are often built using a system of roads that links them up with major Israeli cities without passing through Arab villages and towns. In East Jerusalem (which is formally part of the Occupied Territories but which Israel claims is part of the state of Israel) the settlements have intentionally been built to form a ring around existing Arab dwellings, in an attempt to annex that part of Jerusalem.

The presence of Jewish settlers in the territories has created a high level of mistrust and tension. Because these settlers are Israeli citizens, there now exists in the Occupied Territories a dual system of laws and regulations. The Jewish settlers are subject to the legal and civil authorities which apply to all citizens in Israel, whereas Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza, who have no citizenship, are subject to military law and have no civil rights. The settlers have a deplorable record of provocation and violence against Palestinians. Between 1980 and 1984, at least twenty-three Palestinians, including eleven children, were killed by Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories. In two-thirds of these murders, the settlers used military weapons. <sup>27</sup> Not one settler has ever been tried, convicted and sentenced for any of these murders. <sup>28</sup> These facts exemplify the very close relationship between the Israeli military and the settlers.

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<sup>27</sup> "Israeli Settler Violence in the Occupied Territories: 1980-1984." p. 16.

The Abuse of Palestinian Human Rights Under Occupation.

While Jewish settlers are thoroughly protected by the Israeli military authorities, Palestinians have virtually no rights. Since 1967, Palestinians in the Occupied Territories have not had a representative institution for their protection. The Israeli Military Governor has authority over their movements. They can be arrested, detained, or deported without the intervention of any tribunal. The Palestinians in the Occupied Territories have no civil rights. <sup>29</sup>

No Palestinian is safe from the constant harassment of the military. It is estimated that between 1967 and 1977, approximately 60 percent of the adult male Palestinian population, had spent at least one night in prison. <sup>30</sup> Palestinians are subject to arbitrary arrest, and detention for fourteen days without the benefit of an attorney. Administrative detention is a favourite tool of the Israelis; it allows them to imprison Palestinians for long periods of time without a formal charge and without sending them to trial. All that is required for the 'legal' detention of any Palestinian, is that authorities bring secret 'security violation' evidence before a military judge within 48 hours in Jerusalem or within 96 hours in Israel. The military authorities are then able to hold that person in prison for

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Adams, "Israel's Treatment of the Arabs in the Occupied Territories." p. 35-36.

<sup>30</sup> Metzger et al. This Land is Our Land; The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 67.

six months, without the right of appeal. <sup>31</sup> It is very well documented that torture of Arab prisoners is routine in Israeli prisons. <sup>32</sup>

Deportation is another method used by the Israeli authorities to restrict severely the freedom of the Palestinian people. Since 1967, over 1 500 Palestinians have been legally or illegally deported from the Occupied Territories. <sup>33</sup> They are usually accused of 'endangering the security of Israel', 'terrorist activities' or 'agitating'. Most Palestinians who have been deported, have been community, student, religious and political leaders, teachers, doctors and other professionals. These deportations are in violation of the 1949 Geneva Convention which prohibits occupying powers from expelling members of the indigenous population. <sup>34</sup>

Collective punishment is another common method of controlling the Arab population. The destruction of houses, and the imposition of economic sanctions and curfews are the most commonly used forms of collective punishment. Imposing travel restrictions on entire areas, closure of schools and universities, forcing businesses to close, and trade restrictions are other examples. <sup>35</sup> The destruction of

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<sup>31</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." (Illinois, Database Project on the Palestinian Human Rights, 1988), p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> Metzger, This Land is Our Land; The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 72-3.

<sup>33</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

Palestinian homes is perhaps the severest form of collective punishment imposed by the Israelis. House demolitions are used as punishment for the family of a person who is 'suspected' of 'security crimes', or under the pretext that houses have been built illegally (ie. without a building permit, which the Israelis rarely grant to Palestinians). The scale of the house demolitions and the way in which they are executed, is abominable. Demolitions are executed by up to a hundred soldiers (often accompanied by settlers), usually in the middle of the night. There is no warning preceding the demolition other than a soldier knocking on the door of the house. The family has only a few moments to leave the house and their possessions, animals and crops along with neighbouring houses, are often destroyed by the force of the blast. <sup>36</sup> In 1988 alone, 550 Palestinian homes were destroyed in this manner, leaving 5 000 people homeless. <sup>37</sup> Because many Palestinian families live in houses which their ancestors have lived in for hundreds of years, the emotional trauma of seeing their home demolished, can be devastating.

Palestinians' political freedoms are also severely repressed. Political parties and organizations, political assemblies or meetings, and any forms of political or nationalist expression are forbidden. More than one thousand Palestinian newspapers, magazines and books have been banned. <sup>38</sup> It is illegal to fly

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<sup>35</sup> Metzger et al. This is Our Land: The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 69.

<sup>36</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

Palestinian flags and banners, to wear t-shirts with Palestinian colours, or to use Palestinian slogans. It is illegal to belong to or identify oneself with the PLO, which is an illegal organization.

These repressive measures have led to the migration of more than 455 000 Palestinians from the occupied territories since 1967.<sup>39</sup> Although many have left, those who remain have in recent years developed a sense of pride and worth as a community that has encouraged them to stay and demand their basic human rights.

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<sup>38</sup> G. Pressberg, "The Uprising: Causes and Consequences." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 3, (Spring 1988), p. 39.

<sup>39</sup> Tahir, "An Assessment of Palestinian Human Resources: Higher Education and Manpower." p. 43.

## ii. Universities - Hotbeds of Support for the PLO?

### The Status of Palestinian Universities.

Palestinian universities hold a special place in the Occupied Territories. As the only independently run Palestinian institutions with a semblance of autonomy they have a special significance. They are seen not just as educational institutions, but as symbols of independence, survival and hope. One university teacher explains that "The universities are the embryos for the survival of the Palestinian national movement."<sup>40</sup> This reputation as centres of resistance is partly due to the fact that Israeli military authorities in the Occupied Territories have singled the universities out as hostile institutions, and have set about a systematic programme of disruption and harassment in order to break the spirit of the Palestinians by rendering the universities largely inoperative. Since 1979 the universities on the West Bank in particular have been subjected to increasingly repressive treatment by the military authorities. Official and unofficial closures of universities, curriculum restrictions and censorship of books and periodicals, harsh taxation policies, restrictions on construction of new and maintenance of old buildings, and harassment of staff and students are common examples of the

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<sup>40</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network p. 3.

extensive nature of Israeli violations of Palestinian academic freedoms. <sup>41</sup>

The Israeli military and civil authorities believe that Palestinian universities are not legitimate higher education institutions, but instead are centres of political activity and breeding grounds for terrorists. Whether or not they are seen as a real threat to Israel's security by all, the authorities agree that they are 'hotbeds of support for the PLO.' According to the Israeli authorities, the universities are part of the infrastructure of the PLO. Captain Elise Shazar, spokesperson for the West Bank's civil administration, claims that Palestinian universities are "central to PLO activity, and constitute the principle outlet of an anti-Israeli campaign orchestrated by PLO terrorists". <sup>42</sup> Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Benjamin Netanyahu, claims that the PLO "mounted an all-out effort to subvert the academic purpose of the universities and turn them into centres of incitement, extremism and terror." <sup>43</sup> The belief that the purpose of the universities is to train terrorists, or at the very least to indoctrinate a generation of young Palestinians into anti-Israeli sentiment, seems to be widespread amongst the Jewish

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<sup>41</sup> "Universities Under Occupation." (North American Academics in Solidarity with Palestinian Universities), p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Sullivan, Palestinian Universities Under Occupation. p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



community. It was this belief that was largely responsible for the Israeli decision to make normal life impossible for the universities. The other major reason motivating this policy of repression, the fear that the universities will create a highly trained Arab population, will be addressed later in this section.

### 'Political' Nature of Universities.

It is important for us to understand to what degree the Israeli assessment of the political nature of Palestinian universities is accurate. To some degree, all universities are 'political' in that they serve as fora for debate, discussion, challenging old ideas and formulating new ones and are often the bases for movements which attempt to bring about political change. Compared with most Western universities, the level of political debate in Palestinian universities is relatively high. This is partly because of the severe restrictions forbidding groups of Palestinians to meet. Another reason is the very high level of political consciousness of the Palestinian population living under occupation.

Unlike western universities which are often seen by the wider community as 'ivory towers', Palestinian universities are an integral part of the Palestinian community. Because of the nature of their existence and day-to-day struggles with the Israeli military authorities, the universities cannot be removed from the occupation, or its implications.

The vast majority of university staff and students as individuals are committed to the idea of an independent Palestinian state. It would be a misrepresentation to portray such Palestinian institutions as neutral agencies lacking in revolutionary desires. Living under occupation as oppressed people, every aspect of life is political for the Palestinians. While the Israeli claims that universities are breeding grounds for terrorists is not valid, there is certainly truth in the assertion that the universities are 'political'.

The Israelis claim that the universities are 'political' to the point of being negligent of their academic duties and responsibilities. Hebrew University's rector Rapheal Mechoulam wrote that the major Palestinian university Birzeit "is not a regular academic institution; its students devote much of their time to politics and perhaps to illegal things." <sup>44</sup> Neutral reports and investigations into the operations of Palestinian universities conclude that these allegations are insubstantial. One such report undertaken by the non-political committee of Hebrew University Professors found that in Palestinian universities in the West Bank,

... academic activity is conducted according to accepted norms and their administrations strive for the advancement and regular maintenance of this activity... the committee's impression is that the administration made great efforts to assure the regular execution of its curriculum, in spite of their awkward position, 'between the hammer and the anvil' ... In the academic

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<sup>44</sup> "Universities Under Occupation." p. 2.

institutions of the West Bank, there exists a large population of students who are interested in acquiring a higher education and a large number of lecturers who are concerned with providing that education.<sup>45</sup>

Although the academic standards reached by these institutions is generally considered to be only adequate, the staff and students are determined to achieve high levels of education, and are angered and frustrated by Israeli actions which prevent them from doing so.

Because of their special status as independent autonomous institutions, great demands are put on the universities while many Palestinians hold unrealistic expectations of the universities' revolutionary capabilities. As a result of the universities' position in society, the public expects them to take the role of a governmental institution. Although the universities act as the major vehicle through which the political aspirations of the Palestinians under occupation can be expressed,<sup>46</sup> what is expected of them by many Palestinians is unreasonable. Many see the universities as the major hope for the successful realization of nationalistic aims. Others see their role as raising the standard of living for Palestinians, by creating new avenues for training and employment. Still others see the role of the universities as the Palestinian institution which

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Sullivan, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 18.

represents defiance of Israeli rule.<sup>47</sup> Palestinian universities are not able to fulfil all of these needs; it is not their function to do so. The major functions of all universities must be the transmission of knowledge and the training of young people for professions.

Palestinian universities play a special role in the training of professionals. The universities are unofficially training students with the future state of Palestine in mind. Many see the task of preparing the national infrastructure of an independent state as fundamental to the function of Palestinian universities. Although many university educators are adamant that this is not their role, that the function of a university is a research institute and training facility, one cannot deny the overall political solidarity that exists within the campus grounds between students, staff and administrators.

This brings us to the second major reason motivating the Israeli crack-down on university life. Their fear is that the real functions of the universities is to inspire revolutionaries and to train and equip young Palestinians with the skills necessary to run an independent government and economy. As we have seen in Chapter Two, the Israelis have systematically deprived Palestinians (both inside Israel and in the Occupied Territories) of an adequate

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<sup>47</sup> Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza: A Critical Assessment, p. 57.

education. It has been understood by the Palestinians that the Israeli authorities intend them to receive an education appropriate to their status in society; that of a third-class minority group. The rise and initial popularity and success of independent Palestinian universities greatly concerned Israeli authorities. The idea that a generation of Palestinian politicians, economists, industrialists, engineers and administrators were being trained in cities and villages controlled by the Israelis must have appeared as an enigma. The desire to halt this progress and to interrupt the educational empowerment of thousands of young Palestinians was a very strong motivating factor behind the Israeli decision to target universities (their students in particular) for extreme harassment.

#### The Abuse of Academic Freedom.

Academic freedom in any real sense is virtually unattainable under occupation. Academic freedom is generally taken to comprise the educational, research and administrative functions which universities and colleges expect to carry out without interference or hindrance. These functions include the freedom to teach, devise curricula, appoint staff, purchase academic materials such as books and periodicals, and improve or extend campus facilities. <sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> D.J. Gerner, Academic Freedom and the Palestinian Universities, Occasional Paper No. 1, (North American Academics in Solidarity with Palestinian Universities, 1986), p. 4.

The Israeli authorities claim that the Palestinians enjoy complete academic freedom <sup>49</sup> and that they do not interfere with the running of the universities to any serious degree. They assert that they only interfere with the operation of the universities if their activities are posing a risk to the security of Israel. Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs claims that "academic activity on the university campuses and at other educational institutions in Judea-Samaria (The West Bank) and the Gaza district is conducted without interference by the Israeli administration." <sup>50</sup> Evidence clearly shows this not to be the case. Israeli authorities regularly exercise numerous methods of deliberate subversion of Palestinian universities. <sup>51</sup>

Because of the "deep-seated suspicion on the part of many senior Israeli military officials that Palestinian universities are at best a guise for political activity and at worst incubators of subversive activity" <sup>52</sup> the Israeli military authorities have instituted a policy of systematic harassment and discrimination against the universities.

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<sup>49</sup> "Palestinian Children in the Occupied Territories." p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Analysis, p. 80.

<sup>51</sup> Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza; A Critical Assessment, p. 29-30.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

Military harassment has increased in severity with each year of occupation.<sup>53</sup> The situation reached crisis-point in 1985-86 when "a host of measures - from the reintroduction of administrative detention and a dramatic increase in restriction orders (town arrests) to the policy of 'closure by checkpoint' - kept the student community continually tense, on edge, and in danger."<sup>54</sup> The following year, the authorities began a programme of deportations, which targeted student leaders for the first time. The very real possibility that university students will lose the right to live in their home country and be with their families if they become involved in student movements (deportations are commonplace) is the intolerable situation that Palestinians live with. The other serious fears the Palestinians have is of the violence and random arrests the students are now facing. Students peacefully demonstrating have been confronted with soldiers with live ammunition, tear gas and rubber bullets on campus. Innocent students have been killed by the army on campus. Army officials claim that soldiers are directed to aim low when firing rubber bullets, but students have died after being shot in the back by soldiers.

<sup>55</sup> Israeli soldiers have even been documented denying

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<sup>53</sup> G. Baramki, "Building Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 1, (Autumn 1987), p. 18.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

ambulance staff permission to provide medical assistance to wounded students.<sup>56</sup> Students and staff are also regularly and indiscriminately arrested or 'detained' by the military authorities. During the academic year 1985-86, 115 Birzeit university students were detained and arrested individually. The university has recorded that 1 171 days were spent in prison by students under administrative detention.<sup>57</sup>

Although all university students and staff live under threat of random arrest or army violence, many are fortunate enough to escape direct involvement. The following Israeli policies directly effect every university student, administrator and staff member.

Between 1979 and 1984 the major Palestinian universities were officially closed by the Israeli military authorities for a period of between four days and four months. In this period, there were fourteen official closures.<sup>58</sup> In the academic year 1985-86, every Palestinian university was closed at the same time.<sup>59</sup> The legality and implications

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<sup>56</sup> P. Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XV, No. 4, (Summer 1986), p. 130.

<sup>57</sup> P. Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation, November 1986." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVI, No. 2, (Winter 1987), p. 119.

<sup>58</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation: Palestinians, p. 96.

<sup>59</sup> Baramki, "Building Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 19.



of the closure of educational institutions by an occupying force will be examined in Chapter Four.

### The Effects of University Closures.

The closure of universities is perceived by the Palestinian community as collective punishment. A group of Israeli professors found these actions to be unacceptable. In a report into the violations of the universities' academic freedom, they concluded that

closing a university by the military government is an extreme and harsh measure which prevents all members of faculty and students from studying, teaching and doing research... a form of collective punishment which is imposed on all the students and teachers, with no connection to their personal responsibility for the events which resulted in punishment <sup>60</sup>

When the universities are closed, no-one is allowed access to the university. Administrators are not permitted access to their records and files, students are unable to collect books and lecturers are not allowed to take anything from their offices except their gradebooks. This prevents staff from continuing with their own research for as long as the university is closed (this can be many months). The implications of these official closures will be explored later in this section.

When the military authorities wish to interrupt the universities but are unwilling to officially close them, they use check-points or road-blocks to prevent students and

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<sup>60</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Analysis, p. 84-85.

staff from entering the campus. They set up army blockades either at the gate of the university or in a key street. The army may prevent those wishing to enter to do so for a short period of time, or all day. This action achieves the desired result of unofficially closing the university for the day. Birzeit reported 36 check-point closures during the 1984-85 academic year, and Al-Najar was closed in this manner so often that a total was not recorded.<sup>61</sup> These closure policies disrupt the functioning of the Palestinian universities to an extremely high degree. These closures have a serious detrimental impact on the ability of the universities to retain a sense of normality and stability. Students' concentration and the staff's ability to teach is compromised and courses are disrupted and delayed.<sup>62</sup> The combination of regular closures plus the high level of student detention and arrest, makes it almost impossible for students to complete their undergraduate studies in four years.<sup>63</sup> One very serious effect of the closures is that a great deal of the research being carried out on campus, particularly the scientific projects which use living creatures for experiments, is completely ruined. One Birzeit lecturer whose research is important to the maintenance of

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<sup>61</sup> Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation, November 1986." p. 119.

<sup>62</sup> "Summary of the Conditions of Higher Education in the Israeli Occupied Territories." p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Sullivan, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 33.

the scarce water supply for the Palestinian communities in the West Bank, has experienced these disruptions often. For example,

When the university is closed he is not allowed into his laboratory - even to attend to the animals and micro-organisms which he uses in his work. 'Cleaning up after everything has died and restarting experiments is a way of life for the Palestinian scientist'... <sup>64</sup>

Closures effect not only the university staff and students; the universities are often important employers in the areas, providing work for many Palestinians. While the universities are closed, the faculty are not working, the students are not studying, and those whose livelihood revolves around the universities such as those in the transport, restaurant, accommodation and laundry services, also lose wages. It has been estimated that a two-month closure at Birzeit represents a loss of half a million dollars for the Palestinian community. <sup>65</sup>

In order to reduce the educational effects of the loss of class-time caused by the official and unofficial closures, staff have attempted to replace lost time by making up classes in alternative institutions such as the YMCA and community halls. When the Israelis forbid such alternative classes in mid-1979 during the second major closure of Birzeit that year, the administrators established a system

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<sup>64</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 5.

<sup>65</sup> Baramki, "Building Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 19.

of 'roving teachers' who taught small groups of students in their own homes. After experimenting with a number of attempts to provide quality education off campus, the administrators agreed that their efforts were not entirely successful. They decided instead to make up classes when the closures were lifted. Classes are rescheduled into intensive periods of study while the university remains open. <sup>66</sup>

### Censorship.

One way in which the Israelis attempt to control the nature of Palestinian university education is through the use of censorship. Books and texts written in Arabic are particularly targeted by the authorities. Currently, some 1600 books are specifically banned, including neutral historical accounts of the Arab-Israeli conflict and even a volume of United Nations' Resolutions concerning the conflict. <sup>67</sup> The censorship is inconsistent; some Palestinian universities have access to journals or books that are banned in other Palestinian universities. There are at least 85 journals including studies of poetry and archeology which Birzeit does not have permission to obtain. This level of censorship has serious implications for the academic freedom of Palestinian universities. <sup>68</sup> Many

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Analysis, p. 82.

<sup>68</sup> "Universities Under Occupation." p. 6.

students and teachers from Palestinian universities in the Occupied Territories travel to the Hebrew University to read these journals, newspapers and books, whose possession is illegal only a few miles away. Many of the closure orders use the pretext of illegal possession of banned books. Universities are sometimes closed even when the banned materials were not found by the army. <sup>69</sup>

Another twist in this military regulation is that any books which are not officially permitted by title may be confiscated by the army; not only are Palestinian students and teachers punishable if they possess a banned book, but if they are in possession of any book which has not been passed by the Israeli censors, it too can be confiscated. These regulations are unjustified and deny the Palestinians the freedom to read a great deal of important and academically valuable material.

In addition to formal censorship, Palestinian universities face constant difficulties importing resources such as books and specialist equipment. While Israeli universities receive a tax exemption, Palestinian universities must pay duty on virtually every item they import. The universities (which struggle financially) pay on average fifty percent of the value of these educational resources to the Israeli government in taxes. In some cases the customs charges placed on the goods exceed the cost of the goods, making the

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<sup>69</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 2.

purchase financially infeasible.<sup>70</sup> The Israelis have been making it increasingly difficult for the universities to get access to the donations they so desperately rely on. By passing regulations which puts the control of money coming into the country (from foreign donors) into Israeli hands, they can divert the donations into funds which they control. This is another way in which the Israelis are attempting to subvert the independent operation of the Palestinian universities.

#### Further Repressive Measures.

By controlling the establishment of new university faculties, the Israelis are able to severely limit the curriculum of the Palestinian universities. It is very common for the military authorities to deny permission for essential extensions to existing buildings and the development of new facilities. This has dramatic implications for the universities and their ability to provide appropriate training for young Palestinians. Palestinian universities have been denied the right to develop and improve vital sections of Palestinian economic life. For example, none of the universities has an agricultural school, nor a programme to train engineers for the building and industrial trades.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Analysis, p. 82.

<sup>71</sup> Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza; A Critical Assessment, p. 32.

Another aspect of this policy is that in order to commence any sort of field research, one must obtain a permit from the military authorities and these permits are rarely granted to Palestinians.<sup>72</sup> As research substantially contributes to the very existence of the Palestinian people and to their achievement of self-determination, this policy has far-reaching implications for the whole community.

#### Implications for Palestinian Employment.

A major consequence of this policy is the severe shortage of employment available for Palestinian university graduates. With the unavailability of appropriate and relevant course options, students are studying for degrees which very often will not lead them into employment in the Occupied Territories. Israel's control over both the prescription of courses and the local economy must lead us to see their unwillingness to allow universities to establish or expand badly needed faculties as a deliberate ploy to force many well-educated Palestinians out of the country. As little relevant employment is available to the hundreds of skilled and highly qualified young people who graduate from Palestinian universities each year, many of them reluctantly emigrate to find employment overseas, knowing that the Israelis may not allow them to re-enter their homeland.

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<sup>72</sup> Sullivan, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation." p. 31.

This policy provides the Israelis with many advantages. The Palestinian community does not receive access to vital information and training regarding their agricultural and economic livelihood. Also, the high levels of unemployment force many motivated, clever and skilled youngsters out of the country. This 'brain drain' effectively reduces the percentage of the population who could provide leadership in a Palestinian state. <sup>73</sup>

This situation causes a dilemma for Palestinian educators who desire to provide an education which will lead to real employment prospects, but who are very weary of adapting their educational programmes specifically to suit the economic and employment conditions that the Israelis have manufactured. As one West Bank educator expressed it "...to restrict the growth of higher education to suit the needs of an artificially depressed economy would amount to social strangulation. The short-range effects may be defensible - to discourage emigration - but the long-range impact on society would be disastrous." <sup>74</sup>

The level of Israeli interference in the day-to-day functioning of the universities has been dramatically increased with recent military orders which attempt to keep a tight rein on Palestinian behaviour. One such extreme

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<sup>73</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Analysis, p. 81.

<sup>74</sup> Graham-Brown, Education, Repression and Liberation; Palestinians, p. 101.



example is Military Order #101 which prevents university students from wearing t-shirts which are coloured in green, black and red, as these are the colours of the Palestinian flag.<sup>75</sup> But it is Military Order #854 which is widely understood to be the most repressive. International law forbids an occupying power from legislating in territories it militarily occupies. The Israelis have chosen to ignore this law and have camouflaged their legislation as amendments to Jordanian Law. The Military authorities have the authority:

- 1) to prevent teachers who have been held under administrative detention, or convicted, from teaching;
- 2) to forbid anyone intending to be a student or a teacher to enter the West Bank without written permission of the military government;
- 3) to withhold the permits which allow the universities to function;
- 4) to supervise curricula, choice of text books and the selection of faculty members.<sup>76</sup>

#### Reasons Motivating the Harsh Treatment of Universities.

It is generally understood by the Palestinian community that these regulations are specifically designed to retain political control over the institutions. These orders have not been implemented to improve the educational standards of the universities. They are a legally dubious method of guaranteeing the direct supervision of all important aspects in the operation of the so-called independent institutions.

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<sup>75</sup> Ashmore, Palestinian Universities Under Israeli Occupation - A Human Rights Assessment, p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 6.

We have seen how the Israeli civil and military administrations have deliberately subverted the ability of the Palestinian universities to provide a high quality, regular, educational programme which is relevant to the future needs of the Palestinian community. Despite the Israeli rhetoric about 'security concerns', the real goal of these violations of human rights appears to be to limit the development of the Palestinian nationalist movement towards independence and statehood, by making it impossible for the Palestinians to train future intellectual and community leaders. <sup>77</sup>

In recent years, the Palestinians have shown how Israeli repression has spurred them on and encouraged them not to give up their fight for freedom, justice and a better future for their children. The repression and harassment which Palestinian universities have experienced over the last decade has served as a catalyst for the commitment to education by the Palestinian community. The students and staff members work long, hard hours to maintain the level of education which they know is so essential to their survival as a people. Younger students are becoming more interested in attending university, for by singling out the universities for special attention, the Israelis have shown the Palestinians that these institutions constitute a real threat to the Israelis, similar to that inspired by the PLO.

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<sup>77</sup> "Universities Under Occupation." p. 6.

Israeli actions then, have reinforced the Palestinian determination to educate their people to their very best ability.

## CHAPTER IV

THE INTIFADA - THE DEFIANCE OF THE PALESTINIANS  
AND THE REPRESSION OF THE ISRAELI REGIMEi. The Intifada - A Community UnitedThe Events Which Triggered the Uprising.

There were three important events immediately leading up to and partially causing the explosions of Palestinian anger and protest in December 1987. The first event was the hang glider incident on 26 November in which a young Palestinian entered Israel and killed six Israeli soldiers. With hindsight, it has been suggested that the success of this individual action may have been significant, and that young Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, frustrated by Arab inaction, were encouraged by this display of independent action.

The second event which has been interpreted as a catalyst for the uprising, was the November 1987 Arab summit held in Amman. Palestinians were disillusioned to find Arab nations considering the Palestine question a low priority. As one Palestinian political activist said in December; "It's hard enough for Arab governments to develop a strategy to deal with their top priorities. When we saw that our situation was moved to a low priority, it was the signal that we'd better rely on ourselves". <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> G. Pressberg, "The Uprising: Causes and Consequences." p. 42..

The third incident - the most immediate trigger of the outbursts of demonstrations - occurred in Gaza on 8 December. Four Palestinian workers were killed when their van was hit by an Israeli truck. Israelis claimed that it was an accident, but Palestinians believe the action to be deliberate retaliation for the stabbing of a Jewish man the previous day. The funerals for the men were held in the Jabalia and Mughazi refugee camps; they developed into large, highly emotionally charged demonstrations. The following day the mourning and protests continued. The demonstration in Jabalia was attended by the Israeli army, who shot into the crowd of mourners killing a young teenager. This signalled the beginning of numerous, widespread protests which erupted into violence as Palestinians clashed with the military.

#### The Nature of the Intifada.

What was immediately different about the December 1987 demonstrations was their widespread nature. The Israeli military was very used to dealing with protests in the major cities, university campuses, and the most militant refugee camps, but they were unprepared for the level of protest in many previously uninvolved, relatively peaceful villages and towns. Faced with mass defiance of such a far-reaching nature, the army swiftly responded with unprecedented severity and brutality. Israeli military forces responded to the demonstrations with the unrestrained use of live ammunition. Crowds of protesters who gathered at hospitals and at mass funerals were targeted also. Israeli officials clearly intended to quell the demonstrations quickly by using an

excessively heavy hand. Instead, the Palestinians responded to the 'blood in the streets' with continuous marches. <sup>2</sup>

It soon became apparent that Palestinian frustration and anger was deep enough to draw virtually all segments of Palestinian society into some form of participation of the developing uprising.

Initially, the Israeli government attempted to represent the protests as the work of small pockets of radical Palestinians who were acting without the support of the majority of the Arab population. Defence Minister Yitzak Rabin ordered reinforcements into Gaza and the West Bank and promised to use all of his means to crush the movement that he declared was inspired by the PLO, Iraq, Iran and Syria. In the first ten days of the intifada, 27 Palestinians lost their lives and more than 250 were injured. <sup>3</sup>

The reality is that the uprising is a spontaneous movement arising from within the Palestinian population inside the Occupied Territories which was almost immediately supported by the overwhelming majority of Palestinians. Instead of frightening the Palestinians into submission as expected, the brutality of the Israeli military's response to the demonstrations and protests increased the Palestinian's determination to continue to voice their anger and frustration in an unprecedented manner. The intifada has been

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<sup>2</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 13.

predominantly a non-violent mass movement. It is estimated that perhaps 85 percent of Palestinian activity has been non-violent, although there has been limited use of home-made petrol bombs and occasionally more serious violence. The non-violent methods have taken such forms as mass demonstrations and funeral marches, labour strikes, economic boycotts, the raising of Palestinian flags, the resignation of tax collectors and the non-payment of taxes. The development of community-based health, educational and political institutions has also been a significant part of the movement. <sup>4</sup>

Demonstrations and protests continued to occur sporadically in all parts of the territories, while Palestinian leaders organised themselves quickly and efficiently. In December 1987 an historic one-day strike was successfully carried out by the Arab citizens living inside Israel, in support of the Palestinians in the territories. This was the first united strike since the creation of Israel in 1948. The strike was in protest of the recent Israeli violence and demanded an end to the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. <sup>5</sup>

By January 1988 the Unified National Command of the Uprising (UNCU) was playing a leading role in organising strikes and economic boycotts, to complement marches and demonstrations. Three-day strikes were planned by the leadership for 12-14 January and 19-21 January in 1988, as well as a national day of mourning on 15 January. These strikes were strictly

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<sup>4</sup> G. Sharp, "The Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XIX, No. 1, (Autumn 1989), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> "Uprising in Palestine: The First Year." p. 47.

followed by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Leaders of the uprising also advised Palestinians to boycott Israeli goods and to avoid entering Israel. <sup>6</sup>

#### The Economic Boycott.

In order to disrupt normal daily life as much as possible, and to demonstrate their defiance of the Israeli authorities, Palestinian leaders imposed a daily afternoon strike on the community. All shops were ordered to close at eleven, and where the schools and universities were operating, students have been advised not to return to classes in the afternoon. Israeli goods are no longer sold in most Palestinian shops. The military regularly physically forces shop owners to reopen their shops; shop owners comply, but close their shops as soon as the soldiers have gone. Shops that are forced open by soldiers and left unattended are not looted by Palestinians, although shop owners come back to secure their shops at night fearing that the settlers will vandalize their stores at night. These commercial strikes are observed willingly by most Palestinians and those who were unwilling to comply with the directions of the leadership are harshly treated by Palestinians.

As a direct result of this activity, the sale of locally produced Palestinian goods has dramatically increased, and the sale of Israeli-produced goods has plummeted. For example, in the first eight months of 1988, the consumption of the most popular Israeli cigarettes declined by eighty percent. Also,

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



West Bank produced textiles have largely replaced Israeli textiles, and the consumption of Palestinian fruit, vegetables and dairy products has risen sharply.<sup>7</sup> Spurred on by this success, the UNCU has advised Palestinians to withhold taxes and to resign from positions such as police and local administrators. This too has met with great support from locals. The success of these strikes and economic boycotts has given the Palestinians a feeling of great pride and an appreciation of their potential economic power. The knowledge that so many Palestinians are prepared to risk financial ruin rather than break the national will has created a greater sense of strength than has existed in previous national struggles.

The success of the Palestinian's combined actions is teaching the Arab community a great deal about their potential political power. They have developed a self-sufficiency campaign, as well as extensive local popular committees which are very capable of running local health, educational, agricultural and other key social services. It has become very obvious to the Israelis and to the Arab people, that the Palestinians are able to successfully operate and sustain an entirely independent society. Israel which is categorically opposed to the creation of an independent Palestinian state, must be very concerned to see a virtual mini-state operating inside the territories it is supposed to control. The Israelis must also be gravely concerned about the crippling effects

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<sup>7</sup> Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 20.

these strikes and boycotts have had on the Israeli economy. One suspects that they take heart in the knowledge that despite the apparent political success of these actions, the reality for the Palestinian community has been a fifty percent reduction in their standard of living since the beginning of the Intifada.<sup>8</sup> The Israelis must wonder how long the Palestinians will be prepared to cause their own economic decline.

The underlying foundation of the intifada which has sustained and ensured the level of success and solidarity achieved by the Palestinians then, has been non-violent. Sharp describes non-violent struggle as:

a technique of conducting conflicts using psychological, social, economic, and political weapons. The technique includes three classes of methods: 1) symbolic forms of nonviolent protest (such as vigils, marches, and flying flags); 2) nonco-operation (including social boycotts, labour strikes, and many forms of political nonco-operation ranging from repudiation of legitimacy to civil disobedience and mutiny); and 3) non-violent intervention (ranging from hunger strikes to non-violent occupations and blockades, the creation of self-reliant institutions, and the establishment of a rival parallel government).<sup>9</sup>

The Palestinians are using each of these strategies with great effect.

#### The Military Response to the Intifada.

The Israelis have been very concerned that the international community perceive the group of stone-throwing youths who

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<sup>8</sup> Palestinian Education - A Threat to Israel's Security?, (Cyprus, The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, 1989), p. 64.

<sup>9</sup> Sharp, "The Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle." p. 4.

clash with the Israeli army in the streets, as the main force behind the intifada.

The international media has brought images of violence and anarchy into the living-rooms of many viewers since the uprising began. Cameras have captured evidence of young stone-throwing Palestinians taunting soldiers and pelting them with rocks and primitive home-made explosive devices. What the media fails to inform viewers is that these clashes take place in almost exclusively Arab areas in the Occupied Territories, and that if the military did not enter these areas and use force to end peaceful demonstrations, there would be no violence. The severity of Israeli military aggression used to 'restore peace' is disturbing. At peaceful demonstrations and funerals, Palestinians are confronted by soldiers armed with live ammunition. In the first year of the uprising, 433 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli military and settlers.

<sup>10</sup> Many were fatally wounded by rubber (95 percent steel with a rubber covering) and plastic bullets (plastic covered real metal bullets) used by the army. When the uprising was only three weeks old, Defence Minister Rabin admitted that the military was having difficulty keeping order on the streets. The use of tear gas, live ammunition, deportations and mass arrests, had not quelled the demonstrations. He therefore announced the policy of intentionally beating Palestinians to break their bones; this would stop them from throwing stones.

<sup>11</sup> The 'beatings' involve systematically holding down victims,

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<sup>10</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Pressberg, "The Uprising: Causes and Consequences." p. 47..

stretching out their limbs and deliberately smashing their hands, legs, arms and kneecaps. Severe head injuries are often reported, and hospital workers report tending to Palestinians who have had every limb broken. <sup>12</sup> The Israeli 'beating' policy was met with international condemnation, particularly after a television crew filmed soldiers deliberately breaking the arms of young Palestinian men. Israel's concept of the appropriate level of military force has been changeable. In August 1988 Israeli Army Chief of Staff Don Shomron told a kneset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the military can only have a limited role in the reduction of Palestinian activity. The I.D.F. "cannot alter Palestinian consciousness and cannot change Palestinian will". <sup>13</sup>

In July 1989 however, he authorised the army to shoot Palestinians covering their faces with the traditional headdress on sight. <sup>14</sup> This inconsistency demonstrates the level of frustration experienced by the army who have been unable to calm the population and 'restore order' regardless of the level of military violence used.

In addition to the use of military strength in the attempt to quell the intifada, the Israelis have employed numerous other strategies designed to weaken the spirit and solidarity of the Palestinian community and to break down the alternative

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<sup>12</sup> "Uprising in Palestine: The First Year." p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 27.

systems of leadership and organisation which have developed in response to the crisis. While the military campaign has been waged specifically to 'restore peace', other policies have been introduced to hamper the normal functioning of daily life.

### Collective Punishment.

The Israelis have instituted a policy of 'collective punishment' with the intended result of creating an environment of hardship that will induce the population to stop their programme of defiance. Curfews, which had been in effect in many Gazan and West Bank refugee camps were increased. Power, water and telephone lines were cut, and emergency food supplies to the camps allowed in only under the supervision of UNRWA. <sup>15</sup>

The use of curfews has hit Gazan residents particularly hard. They have been subjected to repeated extended closures which leave them cut off from the rest of the community, often without essentials such as food, water, electricity and medical supplies for days at a time. Soldiers often enter the area under curfew making arrests, using tear gas and live ammunition, and terrifying Palestinian families. <sup>16</sup> Villages can be under curfew regulations for days before others outside the area become aware that this is the case.

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<sup>15</sup> "Uprising in Palestine: The First Year." p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

Mass arrests have been another frequently enforced policy which keeps youth off the streets. The Israelis are desperate to keep as many Palestinians in prison as possible. In a single week Israeli soldiers arrested 1 200 Palestinians - mostly young men charged with stone-throwing. <sup>17</sup> This has led to terrific overcrowding in prisons. Youngsters have been forced to sleep on the ground in tents in very cold weather conditions. Palestinians do not have to be charged with a specific offence to be imprisoned and routinely tortured. The standard torture procedure which prisoners are subjected to is being shackled, hooded, chained to a pole (set at varying heights), and left without food or water for hours or days at a time. <sup>18</sup>

Random military closures of large areas, deportations and large-scale house demolitions are also strategies used by the Israelis to collectively punish the Palestinian population. Another tactic used to break the Palestinian spirit the practise of randomly detaining children, charging them with an offence (whether they have committed one or not) and ordering their parents to pay a fine of between \$1 000 and \$2 000. Many parents are forced to sell land or face a prison term in order to free their children from police custody. <sup>19</sup>

### Settler Violence.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> K. Rouhana, "Children and the Intifadah." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, (Summer 1989), p. 112.

Settlers, like all Jewish Israeli citizens are part of the army, and often possess military weapons. Settler vigilante squads are regular feature of life in the Occupied Territories. <sup>20</sup> Settlers have been known to kidnap children, beat them and leave them to find their own way home. Another settler practise has been tying young Palestinian boys to the bonnet of their cars and driving through Arab villages waving Israeli flags and honking the car horn to attract as much attention as possible. This form of intimidation is designed to taunt Palestinians and to provoke them into breaking their policy of non-violence, so that settlers have good reason to 'retaliate' with acts of violence.

#### Israeli Attack on Palestinian Infrastructure.

As well as these actions, the Israelis have launched a campaign to destroy Palestinian cultural, educational, social and charitable institutions; the popular committees. Popular committees, which are the broad-based grassroots organisations which control of essential Palestinian community services, were banned by the Israelis in August 1988. The popular committees serve in the place of poor or nonexistent Israeli social services and play a special role in the Palestinian community. When other methods of crushing the intifada failed, the Israelis decided to attack the movement from the base. <sup>21</sup>

Authorities arrested hundreds of activists from volunteer health, agricultural and women's committees. The government

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<sup>20</sup> R. Shehadeh, "Occupier's Law and the Uprising." p. 30.

<sup>21</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 39.

justified this decision by explaining that "the 'double aim' of the popular committees was, on the one hand, encouraging 'violent activity', but on the other, 'undermining the Israeli government apparatus and establishing an alternative apparatus in its place'. The committees ... were responsible for the 'institutionalisation of the uprising'" 22

Numerous other atrocities occur as a matter of policy. There have been serious violations of religious freedom since the intifada began. Clergy have been persecuted, holy places desecrated, and services of worship interfered with on frequent occasions. Health workers have also been treated inhumanely. The military has entered hospitals, arresting staff, forcibly removing the wounded and destroying equipment. Soldiers have even fired live ammunition and released tear gas canisters in hospitals. Medical workers have also been detained and assaulted on route to treat patients. 23 Ambulances transporting wounded and dying Palestinians have been commandeered by soldiers and forced to drive into nearby villages so that mass arrests can be made. In addition, private cars carrying wounded to hospitals are fired at or prevented from reaching their destination routinely.

The Israelis have also attempted to limit the usefulness of charitable organisations which have been trying to provide the Palestinians with the financial support, medical and food

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<sup>22</sup> P. Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation 15 August -15 November." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, (Winter 1989), p. 94.

<sup>23</sup> "The Cost of Freedom; Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 42-3.



supplies they desperately need to ensure the success their protest. The Israeli authorities dramatically reduced the amount of undeclared currency one can carry across the bridges from Jordan, in an attempt to limit the capabilities of the relief agencies.

#### Censorship.

Throughout the uprising the Israelis have severely restricted journalists' access to cover the dramatic events. Palestinian journalists have been particularly harshly treated; the Palestinian Press Service was forcibly closed for eighteen months, independent journalists have had their offices raided, and their telephones cut off. <sup>24</sup> All press releases, including those from the foreign media, have been subject to censorship. The Israelis have restricted journalist's entry into certain areas, which they claim are closed military zones, film and notes are confiscated, and equipment has been destroyed. One foreign journalist was shot and many others have been detained and beaten by soldiers. Eight foreign journalists were expelled from Israel and 38 have been arrested or placed under administrative detention for six months or more. <sup>25</sup>

#### Israeli Attempts to Undermine Intifada Leadership.

Finally the Israelis have put a great deal of energy into identifying and attempting to break the leadership of the uprising. The UNCU has the unreserved support of the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Palestinian community. The Israelis set about to undermine their leadership by confusing and dividing the Palestinian people. They forged leaflets which are the primary source of communication between the UNCU and the people. These leaflets use patriotic Palestinian language and set strike and protest schedules which conflicted with those distributed by the UNCU. The Palestinian community had little trouble distinguishing forged leaflets from the genuine UNCU ones.

The extremely high number of arrests and detentions has largely been an attempt to round up leaders. In fact so many young Palestinian men have been arrested that the Israelis have released 'criminals' in order to make room for the huge numbers of political prisoners.<sup>26</sup> In addition to these measures, the Israelis have opposed every decision made by the UNCU. When the UNCU advised shop keepers to close their shops at eleven o'clock, the army did everything they could to convince shop owners to remain open. Similarly with school strikes, the army has done all it can to ensure that students disobey the UNCU's instructions. The Israelis have successfully created an environment of tension and fear, which has led some parents to comply with the military's demands rather than send their children into confrontational situations. Nevertheless the Israeli's crack-down on the UNCU has been largely unsuccessful because of the nature of the Palestinian leadership's organisational structure.

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<sup>26</sup> D. Kuttab. "The Palestinian Uprising: The Second Phase, Self-Sufficiency." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 4, (Summer 1988), p. 37.

In the early 1980s, Palestinians learned that in order to protect their leaders, they were best to create a grassroots network of organizations whose task it would be to mobilize Palestinians at the base of society. In order to ensure the smooth running of their work, decision making takes place locally. There is no single leader of any organization; people are elected onto committees based on their skills and abilities. This means that the organizations are less vulnerable when their leaders are arrested or deported. <sup>27</sup>

#### The UNCU Leadership.

The UNCU leadership are a senior group of underground activists whose identities are secret. They are rotated in order to remain unknown. The UNCU organises and plans the major protests which occur simultaneously across the Occupied Territories, while local strikes and demonstrations are organised by the grassroots organisations and popular committees in the area. Pressberg notes that there are two things that are striking about this new form of leadership.

The first is that it is a pragmatic leadership: it plans tactics so that the public is energized, not exhausted. Second, it has been able to mobilize an unprecedentedly high percentage of the population. The result of this mobilization is that Palestinians make it difficult, if not impossible, for the IDF to retain control of the streets. <sup>28</sup>

The Israelis have tried to make an issue of the fact that the PLO does not have 'hands on' command of the uprising, and that the leadership is local. They have heralded this as evidence

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<sup>27</sup> Pressberg, "The Uprising: Causes and Consequences." p. 42.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

that the PLO does not have the level of popular support that they claim. In fact, the PLO is surprised by the dimension of the unrest. <sup>29</sup> This does not take anything away from the strength and popular support of the PLO. While the UNCU are essentially operating on their own and do not take specific instructions from the PLO leadership, they regularly fax copies of leaflets to PLO headquarters in Tunisia for comment. One West Bank resident explained; "It is physically impossible to control an uprising of this breadth and scale from the outside - it just wouldn't work. I mean Yasser Arafat can't call every morning to Abdul and say go out and throw stones - it just isn't practical." <sup>30</sup> Palestinians explain that the uprising is controlled by the PLO because as Palestinians, they are the PLO. <sup>31</sup> Jonathan Kuttat, a leading Palestinian activist explains;

My understanding of the relationship between the Palestinian people and the leadership outside is that it is an organic, dynamic relationship in which people in the occupied territories make their wishes and interests known and in which the leadership can issue orders and is obeyed precisely because and to the extent that it represents them, their needs, and their aspirations. <sup>32</sup>

The fact that the leaders of the uprising are local Palestinians, and that local villages and refugee camps organise their own activities has certainly been part of the reason leading to the mass participation of the Palestinian

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<sup>29</sup> I. Black, "The Uprising against Israel." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 3, (Spring 1988), p. 160.

<sup>30</sup> Confidential Interview.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Kuttat, "The Children's Revolt." p. 31.

people. Men, women and children of all ages are involved not only in consumer boycotts, commercial and school strikes, but also in street demonstrations. Demonstrations are often organised for the middle of the night (as soldiers can not control the streets effectively in the dark), and hundreds of villagers gather to demonstrate, fly Palestinian flags and sing nationalistic songs. Every Palestinian in the territories identifies with the struggle. One Gaza residents explained that as almost 50 000 of the 650 000 Gazan residents have been arrested since the beginning of the uprising, the population has no choice but to be politically involved. <sup>33</sup>

The sporadic outbursts of frustration which developed into what has become known as the intifada, quickly transformed into an efficiently organised, well led, popularly supported revolutionary nationalistic movement of great depth and significance. While initially the primary motivation was to remove the military presence in the Occupied Territories, the level of support and success of the intifada has spurred the Palestinians to demand much more.

#### The Aim of the Uprising.

The intifada is a movement which rejects the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, and affirms the rights of Palestinians to independent statehood and self-determination. <sup>34</sup> The most

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<sup>33</sup> M. K. Makhul, "This is Not a Revolt - This is War." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 3, (Spring 1988), p. 94.

<sup>34</sup> H. Mikhail-Ashrawi, "From Intifada to Independence." Arabische Visie, (Netherlands, The PLO Information Office), p. 15.

significant aim of the intifada then, is political independence for the Palestinians. Sharp has outlined a number of important strategies that the Palestinians have established in order to achieve their primary goal.

1) To continue developing within the territories 'parallel' social, economic, and political institutions (the infrastructure); 2) to continue mobilizing Palestinian non-violent resistance in the territories so that the people are 'unrulable' by the occupiers; 3) to split further Israeli public opinion on the issues of continued occupation, repression, and willingness to recognise an independent Palestine; 4) to contribute to splits within the Israeli political establishment by encouraging opposition to present occupation policies and support for accepting an independent Palestine; 5) to contribute to the partial split between the Israeli and United States governments concerning the 'problem of the Palestinians'; 6) to encourage world public opinion and diplomatic efforts to help settle the conflict and assist in establishing recognition of de jure Palestinian independence.<sup>35</sup>

#### The Fundamental Cause of the Intifada.

Although the intifada erupted spontaneously and appeared to be an unplanned outburst of anger, it was essentially the result of more than twenty years of oppressive and violent Israeli military occupation. Even the most basic human rights have been denied the Palestinians since the occupation began in 1967. Palestinians' homes are routinely demolished, they are arrested and beaten randomly, their leaders have been deported or imprisoned, and their day-to-day lives are severely regulated by over 1300 military orders.<sup>36</sup> When the Palestinian youth went out into the streets in December 1987, they carried a life-time of anger and frustration, and they

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<sup>35</sup> Sharp, "The Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle." p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Sayigh, "Roots of the Intifada: Zionist Policy in Palestine." p. 197.

had no fear. The generation who had grown up under occupation could not remain passive. They felt that they had to stand up against the repressive Israeli authorities, even if the result of that action would be their death. <sup>37</sup> One Palestinian woman described their feelings succinctly. "The people are very decided. We have lost a lot and we have nothing more to lose, and we don't want to live under the occupation anymore." <sup>38</sup>

The initial success of the uprising encouraged not just the youngsters, but the whole Palestinian community to enjoy and express new feelings of pride and defiance. A West Bank resident explained that for the first time in many, many years, Palestinians walked proudly with their heads held high, staring down soldiers with their eyes rather than bowing their heads. A tremendous sense of pride and defiance had replaced their passive acceptance of their fate. <sup>39</sup> Many Palestinians believed that since the PLO abandoned international terrorism, the Palestinian people had been forgotten. This new self-confidence has given them the courage to state that they will no longer accept the occupation and to demand independence. The PLO responded to these demands by calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the occupied territories. The PLO declared that

Because of the intifada and its irreversible revolutionary impulse, the history of Palestine has

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<sup>37</sup> M. Bar-on, "Israeli Reactions to the Palestinian Uprising." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 4, (Summer 1988), p. 48.

<sup>38</sup> Confidential Interview.

<sup>39</sup> Confidential Interview.

therefore arrived at a decisive juncture... The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the state of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem. 40

Within two weeks of the 15 November 1988 declaration, sixty countries had formally recognised the new Palestinian state.

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The intifada represents the most successful and sustained effort by Palestinians in the Occupied Territories to take control of the their own national struggle. They have achieved a great deal since the beginning of the intifada. The high level of international attention is one important outcome of the uprising. The Palestine question is securely back on the international agenda. Foreign ambassadors and politicians have decried the brutality of the Israelis and have voiced support for the Palestinian struggle. The unarmed Palestinians have exposed Israeli brutality and transformed their image from that of terrorists to one of a courageous, non-violent community. The massive slump in the tourist industry in Israel, the enormous expense the Israeli government must undertake in order to maintain the level of military presence it desires, and the virtual loss of the Occupied Territories as Israel's major export market, must limit Israel's long-term ability to withstand the Palestinian's demands. Perhaps the greatest achievement for the Palestinian community has been their own dramatic political growth. They will never again passively accept the inhumane conditions they have lived under

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<sup>40</sup> Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 25.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 26.



for so long. They are demanding more for themselves and for their children. If the international community fails to listen to this cry, it be betraying the Palestinians and its own human integrity. This is a major opportunity to rectify a political and historical injustice which we cannot afford to forfeit. <sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Mikhail-Ashrawi, "From Intifada to Independence." p. 20.

## ii. The Crackdown on Education

Since the beginning of the intifada in December 1987, the Israelis have implemented a variety of measures of collective punishment, in an attempt to suppress the uprising. Their intention has clearly been to break the spirit of the Palestinian community. Education has been one of the major targets and the Israelis have carried out a comprehensive attack on every form of Palestinian education. The military authorities have attacked schools, occupied schools and used them as detention centres and military headquarters, harassed, arrested, beaten and detained teachers and students, closed universities and schools for over two years, and outlawed any form of alternative education instituted by the Palestinian community. Universities have been subjected to particularly severe interference. It is estimated that over fifty percent of those put under town arrest and forty percent of individuals in administrative detention are affiliated with the universities. <sup>43</sup>

While many of the measures employed by the Israelis against the educational institutions are not new, the widespread and collective nature of the closures and attacks on teachers and students is unprecedented.

### Reasons Behind the Crackdown.

There are two major reasons motivating the Israelis' decision to target education. Firstly, the Israelis appreciate the importance of education to the Palestinian community. (See

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<sup>43</sup> Gerner, Academic Freedom and the Palestinian Universities, p. 5.

Chapter Two) The second reason is that thirty-five percent of all Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories are between the ages of six and fourteen.<sup>44</sup> Almost half of the Palestinian population are students, and almost all Palestinian families have at least one student in the home. Therefore, the suppression of education affects a tremendously high percentage of the population. These ideas will be dealt with in more detail below in an attempt to understand the motives behind the policy.

### School and University Closures.

All eight universities and 1600 lower grade institutions comprising secondary schools, elementary schools and even kindergartens have been affected by the closure orders. Every school, college, university or vocational training centre in the West Bank or Gaza Strip was ordered closed by the Israeli authorities for at least some period in 1988.<sup>45</sup>

On 3 February 1988, a closure order was issued by the Israeli military authorities shutting all primary and secondary schools on the West Bank 'until further notice'. The order was renewed monthly until 3 May 1988 when the authorities announced that schools would be allowed to reopen, at different dates in late May and early June. While most schools except those in areas under curfew did reopen briefly on 21 July all schools which had been reopened were ordered shut. In January 1989 the government issued a blanket order closing all schools again 'until further notice'. This unpredictable

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<sup>44</sup> "Uprising in Palestine : The First Year." p. 441.

<sup>45</sup> Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 1.

policy of opening and shutting schools continued until June 1989 when most schools were reopened. <sup>46</sup>

Centres of higher education on the West Bank were not all closed at the same time. Bethlehem University was already under a closure order which was issued in October 1987, following a demonstration at the university during which a student was shot dead by the army. Some universities and training centres were closed during the first weeks of the uprising in December 1987, and the major universities on the West Bank were closed in January 1988. By early February 1988, all Palestinian institutes of higher learning were closed indefinitely. To this day, most of the universities remain inoperative. <sup>47</sup>

In the Gaza Strip the Islamic University has been closed since December 1987, but the primary and secondary schools remained open through the winter and spring of 1988. However between 35 to 50 percent of the school days were lost due to curfews. This resulted in a three week extension of the school year. <sup>48</sup> (The reasons behind the different treatment of Gaza Strip and West Bank educational institutions will be explained later in the chapter).

The closure of every school, community college, and university in the West Bank has affected approximately 300 000 school-age

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<sup>46</sup> Israel's War against Education in the Occupied West Bank : A Penalty for the Future, p. 14.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 14-15.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

children, as well as 18 000 university and community college students. 49

#### Israeli Rationale for School Closures.

Israeli military authorities have claimed that they are closing schools and universities for security reasons as they are places where students gather, therefore they have the potential for creating networks of young Palestinian terrorists and leaders of the uprising. As we have seen in Chapter Three, the fear and suspicion that the Israelis feel towards Palestinian schools and especially universities is to some degree justifiable. University student leaders are widely known to have direct links with PLO leadership and school children of all ages are open in their support for the PLO. Young Palestinians have a very high degree of political consciousness and actively participate in student branches of political organisations which publicly oppose Israel's presence in Palestine.

The Israeli Civil Administration of the West Bank described schools as "centres of unrest" and "centres of violent protest". 50 According to the authorities, schools and universities have turned into breeding grounds for violence and must therefore be kept closed until students can use them properly, as places for education. Rabin stated on 24 December 1987 that: "We will close schools which have ceased to fulfil their function as educational institutions and which have been consistent in allowing their children out into the street." 51

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49 Ibid., p. 3.

50 Israel's War against Education in the Occupied West Bank : A Penalty for the Future, p. 2.

51 Ibid.

The Israeli authorities have gone so far as to suggest that Palestinian parents have asked them to close the schools because they are afraid that their children will be injured or even killed in violent school demonstrations. Military spokesmen have repeatedly claimed that they want to keep schools open and are willing to do so if school administrators can keep their students under control. Thus the Israelis have attempted to blame the school closures on the activities of the students and the inability of the school administrators to maintain order. In response to allegations that the closure policies are a form of collective punishment intended to cause suffering within the whole Palestinian community, the Israelis have made adamant denials. "In an official statement to the Jerusalem Post, the Civil Administration spokesperson said: 'I can state quite categorically that there is no such policy. We are not using the closure of schools as a punishment.'" 52

The validity of the security rationale proposed by the Israelis will be challenged later in this section.

#### Closures Put Palestinian Children Onto the Streets.

The most obvious short-term effect of this closure policy was that it put almost 300 000 children out on the streets. The level of violent confrontation with the military increased dramatically as a result of this fact.

Palestinians, from as young as seven years old, right up to university students, have become involved in these street battles. Each small group has their own part to play in the intricate campaign played out on the streets of the Occupied

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52 Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 37.

Territories. Daoud Kuttab outlined <sup>53</sup> how the young people divide up into three groups when they are confronted with the Israeli military (who are in the Arab areas typically to break up peaceful demonstrations, but many times looking to make arrests of whichever groups of youngsters they come across). He explains that one group acts as look-outs who position themselves on rooftops and warn where the army is coming from. The offensive team are the bravest and the nimblest boys who advance towards the army and throw stones, while the defensive team steps in to cover the retreating offensive team. Kuttab explained how youngsters perform different functions in the organised street battles (which many adults also participate in) according to their age. Those aged between about seven and ten, roll tyres to the middle of the road, covering them with gasoline and setting them alight. The eleven to fourteen year olds place large stones in the road to stop traffic. The fifteen to nineteen year olds comprise the group known as 'the veteran stone throwers'. They are the most sought after by the army. Palestinians older than nineteen usually have leadership and co-ordination roles. They have expert ability to accurately assess which types of ammunition the Israelis are using.

#### The Military Response to Student Demonstrations.

The army violence which meets these defiant youths is excessive. Here are two very typical examples. The military arrived at a student demonstration being held in protest of the closure of several schools in the area by mainly

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<sup>53</sup> Kuttab, "A Profile of Stonethrowers." p. 16-17.

schoolgirls in Rafah. They began to fire indiscriminately into the crowd of children, while helicopters dropped tear-gas canisters on them. Forty-four students were shot and wounded - twelve critically - and at least one hundred and twenty were injured by either the tear-gas or by being beaten by the soldiers. <sup>54</sup> On another occasion some forty Bethlehem school students were hospitalised after being lined up against a wall and clubbed by soldiers who were apparently looking for stone throwers. <sup>55</sup>

Parents of these youngsters are facing a serious dilemma. On the one hand it would be impossible for them to forbid their children to be involved in the demonstrations as the entire community plays a part, and the children are particularly politically aware. Also with the schools out of bounds for the children where else can the children play but on the streets? On the other hand however, the parents have a real and justified daily fear that their children may be beaten, arrested, tear-gassed, hit by rubber bullets, or even murdered on the streets.

While the schools were out of bounds for students, the military took over many school grounds and used them for army headquarters, detention centres, or military barracks. When schools reopened in May 1988, there was extensive evidence of army vandalism. Journalists who visited Khalduniya school in Nablus saw "anti-Arab graffiti and Israeli army insignias painted and cut into the school walls, broken

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>55</sup> Background Briefing, Vol. III, No. 26, (PLO Information Office, Australia, February 1990), p. 6.



windows, desks, chairs, closets and laboratory equipment, and excrement both in the bathrooms and in adjacent rooms." 56

According to Al Haq (Law in the Service of Man) the military occupation of schools and the army vandalism which is occurring are violations of international humanitarian law. Article 56 of the Hague Regulations addendum to the IV Hague Convention of 1907 expressly prohibits "all seizure of, destruction or willful damage (of) institutions dedicated to ... education." 57

Faced with the uncertainty of the future of education, Palestinian educationalists and parents had to decide whether to wait and hope that educational facilities would resume operation shortly, or to treat the situation as a crisis that needed immediate intervention. The outrage of the Palestinian community combined with international anger over the situation would surely lead to the reopening of at least primary schools and kindergartens in a very short time. On the other hand, the Palestinian community was only too familiar with the ruthless nature of the Israeli regime. Understanding that the Israelis were attempting to break the intifada by weakening the spirit of the people, the Palestinian community set about collectively dealing with the lack of formally provided education.

#### Popular Education.

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<sup>56</sup> Israel's War against Education in the Occupied West Bank : A Penalty for the Future, p. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

What became known as 'Popular Education' came about in response to the banning of regular educational facilities. The Palestinian community has taken on the job of educating their own children in small clandestine groups in their homes, in churches and mosques, and in community halls. This underground form of education has functioned in coordination with local popular committees which have grown out of the need to develop a local Palestinian infrastructure.

It has been estimated that as many as 1 000 university students in the West Bank have been attending secret classes in private homes or mosques. This has also been the widespread practise for younger students who are in more desperate need of ongoing education in order to maintain their present levels of understanding and to avoid what could develop into chronic literacy and learning difficulties if their education lapses for too long. Popular education has developed using the community as a major resource and therefore involves field trips and local culture to a large degree.

UNRWA officials were among those who began working in this way to provide an education for the abandoned students. They were responsible for starting an ambitious home teaching programme for first, second and third graders. "About 10 000 home-instruction booklets in math, science, religion and Arabic were printed, and teachers planned to deliver them home to home, where students were to work under the tutelage of their parents or older siblings." <sup>58</sup> The Care and Learning association launched a Home or Popular Education Project in April 1989 in an attempt to bring learning facilities into

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<sup>58</sup> J. Brinkley, "For West Bank Arabs, Education has been Deemed a Criminal Act."

children's homes. Every seven to ten days, depending on the conditions prevailing at any given time, each child in the programme receives a new learning booklet and notebook, along with coloured pencils, scissors, glue and modelling clay. Local volunteers who have been trained by the association, are responsible for providing the children in their local area with the resources. The association has further extended its programme to include a book lending service. The children have themselves become responsible for distributing and sharing the books with other children in their area. One child is responsible for ten books. They must ensure that ten of their neighbours study each book. Once these children have finished the ten books, another ten are substituted and the process is repeated. Neighbourhoods are also organizing special self-expression and creativity group activities for the children.

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It is of considerable significance that the seemingly tragic closure of educational facilities was the catalyst that led to the first real Palestinian control of what was being taught. Popular education broke new ground in terms of the control of the Palestinian curriculum. For the first time this century, the Palestinian community determined what subjects their children should learn. For the first time, educators were not bound by out of date Jordanian material or resources that had been censored by the Israelis. Jonathan Kuttub reports that educators have undertaken "the ambitious project of setting up a Palestinian tawjihi curriculum to replace the Jordanian and

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59 "In Defence of Children Under Occupation: Association Combats Israel's War on Education."

the Egyptian ones." <sup>60</sup> New subjects such as pottery, adult education and first aid have also been introduced in some areas, depending on the skills of the available volunteers. <sup>61</sup> Students have a new enthusiasm in their attitude to education; because the Israelis want to take their education away from them, the students have become desperate to protect it. Khalil Mahshi, principal of the Friends Boys School in Ramallah explained that

Students are learning for the first time to appreciate education, not as something that is forced on them, but as something they have come to do willingly. The challenge of the semi-secret education and the new methods employed by teachers, are making students very excited about the educational process. <sup>62</sup>

Educators have experienced an awakening of understanding also, and are now stimulated by ideas about a new more relevant formula for Palestinian education.

For formal educational purposes the conditions have been by no means ideal, however the emergence, maintenance and relative success of popular education created a great feeling of power and energy within the Palestinian community. This turned out to be another way in which the Palestinian people showed the Israelis and the world that they would not be beaten by the repression of a military regime that attempted to crush their spirit and sabotage their future.

#### The Banning of Popular Education.

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<sup>60</sup> Kuttat, "The Children's Revolt." p. 30.

<sup>61</sup> P. Johnson, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation, February - May 1988." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVII, No. 4, (Summer 1988), p. 117.

<sup>62</sup> Kuttat, "The Palestinian Uprising: The Second Phase, Self-Sufficiency." p. 41.

While there has been no indication that either the educators or the students who have participated in this form of popular education have been involved in any activities other than academic pursuits, the Israeli military government has declared all forms of alternative education illegal. Organised popular education in the form of clandestine teaching and information sharing sessions has been banned and so has even the practise of distributing homework worksheets for students to complete in their own homes. Furthermore, parents have been prevented from picking up home study resources for their children (which was seen as a way of overcoming the gathering together of groups of students gathering together, which was the situation the authorities had been so desperate to prevent). In early September 1988 the Israeli military authorities launched an intensive campaign against popular education. Kindergartens, study groups in mosques and community halls were raided by soldiers who arrested students and teachers. <sup>63</sup> Anyone discovered participating in any form of popular education, teachers, parents, local volunteers, older brothers and sisters and even young students were likely to be arrested, and faced the possibility of a ten year jail sentence and a US \$5 000 fine. <sup>64</sup>

Israeli military authorities have stated that banning popular education has been necessary because its operation violated the closure order against all West Bank educational institutions. They rationalised their ban on alternative

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<sup>63</sup> Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 18.

<sup>64</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 1.

education extending to the prevention of the distribution of homework exercises by explaining that they believed that schools were the proper places for education.

#### The Policy of Individual School Closures.

Since May-June 1988 the policy of collective closures of schools has been largely phased out and has been replaced with a policy of individual school closures. West Bank schools have been opened, reclosed and reopened again by the military, in a sporadic and unpredictable fashion. There are two major reasons for this new approach from the Israeli military authorities; firstly the growing outrage of the international community and secondly the desire to maintain control of Palestinian education.

Both inside and outside Israel there has been widespread condemnation of Israel's policy of collectively closing all Palestinian educational institutions. Israeli academics have been vocal in their condemnation. Four hundred Israeli university professors petitioned the Ministry of Defence expressing their anger, and demanding that schools and universities be immediately reopened. They stated their belief that the reason behind the closures was the desire to punish collectively the Palestinian population for the continuation of their struggle against the occupation.<sup>65</sup> International agencies such as UNRWA have also voiced their outrage, drawing the same conclusions regarding the motivation behind the

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<sup>65</sup> J. Brinkley, "For West Bank Arabs, Education has been Deemed a Criminal Act."

closures, and expressing the inappropriateness of using the education of youngsters as a bargaining tool.

The Israeli military government fears that if Palestinian popular education had the time to consolidate, it would become an unstoppable force. Many Palestinians believe that the speed and success with which their community established their own educational structures was one of the major contributing factors leading to the Israeli government's decision to reopen the schools. "They were afraid we would take control of our education," observed one educational administrator. "They are now adopting a policy of short-term openings and closures in an attempt to prevent us from continuing popular education as well as to disrupt education within the standard school system." <sup>66</sup>

The Israelis have shown how desperate they are to remain in control of Palestinian education in a number of ways. The army has repeatedly stated that the schools on the West Bank will remain open as long as administrators and parents ensure that students abide by military regulations. The provisions that were particularly important to the Israelis were that students not participate in demonstrations and that while schools were open, the students attend for the whole school day (which is in direct conflict with the instructions of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising). The army has gone so far as to threaten to close some schools again if parents refuse to sign guarantees that their children will abide by these

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<sup>66</sup> "The Cost of Freedom: Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 38.

regulations. <sup>67</sup> The Israeli decision to enforce a policy of unpredictable individual school closures has demonstrated their expertise in maintaining pressure on the Palestinian people.

#### The Role of the UNLU.

The Unified National Leadership of the Uprising has closely monitored the activities of the students both in and out of school. The UNLU has recently called on students to pursue their education with diligence. Since the reopening of the schools however, the UNLU has requested that teachers and students maintain unity with the rest of the community by only attending schools during the non-strike hours (ie. finishing school at noon). This order has been adhered to strictly by students who are often more willing to follow the directives of the UNLU than the adults. Teachers have very serious concerns about finishing the curriculum and are sometimes hesitant to relinquish any more classroom time, when they are permitted to be teaching again. Parents too are very concerned to see their children's education getting back on track. The students themselves have a very high level of political consciousness and understand that they have an important role to play in the uprising. While the students are very serious about learning, and realise how important their education is, they see that the overall struggle against the Israeli occupation of their land as being the most important priority and are therefore committed to following all UNLU directives.

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<sup>67</sup> Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 41.



When schools have been permitted to reopen, there has been an exceptionally high rate of attendance, as the whole community is dedicated to the reinstatement of regular education. However, the reopening of schools, has not created a more docile student population, nor has it resulted in a more peaceful or less strained relationship between students and the army. Indeed many schools were closed again only weeks after they had been permitted to open, following violent clashes with the military or more often, after peaceful student demonstrations. On 17 July 1988 an UNRWA school at Nur al-Shams refugee camp was closed because a Palestinian flag was raised on one of the school buildings. <sup>68</sup> A far more serious situation erupted on 27 June 1988 when a peaceful gathering of students demonstrating about the demolition of local Palestinian homes was attacked by over two hundred soldiers who beat, tear-gassed and fired at students with aluminium bullets. Some one hundred youngsters were taken to hospital in private cars as ambulances were prevented from entering the area which was closed as a military zone. <sup>69</sup> Even when schools have been reopened and students have attempted to settle down for serious 'catch-up study', the Israelis have very often used further methods to disrupt the Palestinian quest for education. Soldiers and sometimes settlers continue to interfere with schools. The army has arrested large numbers of students and has taken over school premises for use as temporary detention centres. <sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>69</sup> Israel's War against Education in the Occupied West Bank : A Penalty for the Future, p. 3-4.

<sup>70</sup> "Uprising in Palestine : The First Year." p. 268.

### The Effects of the Closures.

West Bank teachers have experienced a great deal of hardship during the school closures. Teachers in government schools who number 12 000 (78 percent of the total teaching staff on the West Bank), have received on average about one-third of their regular pays, which has forced most of them to take other jobs; many teachers are not returning to schools when they have been reopened. <sup>71</sup> As many as 9 000 teachers went without any pay for at least some part of the duration of the school closures. <sup>72</sup>

Teachers were often afraid to be involved in popular education because of the fear of never being allowed to teach again. A Palestinian university lecturer explained to me that the teachers have been under continual observation, and that harassment is common and widespread.

If any teacher has national consciousness and she shows it, ...they (the Israelis) are using massively the punishment of displacement. If she lives in Ramallah and they saw that they don't like her, they can transfer her to another school very far from her house, in a small village. This tool is being used very widely. Or to stop her from being promoted, or to fire her completely. <sup>73</sup>

She also explained the unequal way the Israeli government has treated government school teachers in terms of the payment of their salaries and their job security, in an attempt to break their solidarity.

During the uprising the government decided to fire some of the teachers because they said that no Arabs are paying taxes, and we are covering expenses of this school

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<sup>71</sup> J. Brinkley, "For West Bank Arabs, Education has been Deemed a Criminal Act."

<sup>72</sup> "Uprising in Palestine : The First Year." p. 441.

<sup>73</sup> Confidential Interview.

from the taxes so if you don't pay taxes, we will not pay salaries at all. So they fired some, and they stopped salaries for some, and they reduced salaries for some and they interrupted the monthly payment of teachers. Instead of paying at the end of the month, they started paying after two weeks, and not all the money together, and its a way to disturb the usual life of the teachers. <sup>74</sup>

All Palestinian educational institutions have suffered severe financial difficulties during the closures. Along with the government school teachers, private teachers' salaries have had to be decreased as tuition fees from students have stopped coming in. Also, as the crisis continued, many had to be dismissed. All of the Palestinian universities have faced the same crippling financial crisis and most do not have the resources or financial backing to survive any greater extension of the closures. Under the direction of the Council of Higher Education universities have been involved in fundraising activities in an attempt to save the universities.

#### Closures - Violation of International Law.

The collective closures of Palestinian schools, universities and training and research centres, and the Israeli military government's ban on popular education are in violation of local and International law. Under West Bank law (Jordanian Education Law No. 16 of 1964 with amendments by Israeli military authorities) the provision of education for first through ninth graders is compulsory and the Minister of Education is under an obligation to enforce compulsory education. This law expressly prohibits primary and secondary

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

school closures.<sup>75</sup> Article 112 of the Education Law No. 16 regulates school attendance and states that:

The number of school days in each of the compulsory and secondary stages in each scholastic year shall be between 205-210 days for schools which have one vacation day a week and between 170-175 days for schools which have two days off per week... It is not possible to end the school year except after this number of days has been completed.  
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A precedent was set by an Israeli High court in 1981 in a decision which proclaimed the illegality of the closure of Birzeit University 'until further notice'. The court demanded that the military authorities specify the exact period of the closure in the closure order. The closure of both schools and universities in the West Bank clearly violates that 1981 High Court direction.<sup>77</sup> For these reasons, the closures are in violation of local law.

The Israeli government has also committed an infringement of International law by its actions. The right to education is a fundamental human right established in International Law.<sup>78</sup> This inalienable right to education has clearly been violated in the Occupied Territories. Moreover as an occupying force, Israel has special international obligations to ensure the provision of genuine and proper welfare for the population under their military occupation. Specifically, an occupying force must "... facilitate the proper working of all

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<sup>75</sup> "A Penalty for the Future." Ajme News (American Justice for the Middle East), Vol. XIV, No. 2, (November-December 1988), p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> Israel's War against Education in the Occupied West Bank : A Penalty for the Future, p. 9.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 10-11.

institutions devoted to the care and education of children."  
(Article 50, IV Geneva Convention) <sup>79</sup>

It is clear then, that the actions of the Israelis are not only immoral but also illegal. Al Haq reports that the extended closures of universities and schools are without international precedent. <sup>80</sup> The outlawing of all forms of alternative education and home study are particularly appalling acts, especially for the younger Palestinians and can certainly not be rationalised or justified by the claim that Israeli security is somehow being threatened.

#### Israeli Reasons Behind the Closures.

There are several reasons why the Israeli claim that the school and university closures were necessary for security reasons appears illegitimate to the Palestinians. Firstly, closure orders were not issued solely to those schools or campuses which had been involved in clashes with the army, or particularly violent demonstrations. Instead all 1 194 West Bank schools were closed simultaneously without regard for their particular recent histories or even their reputations. Even after the blanket school closure had ended, schools were closed somewhat indiscriminately.

Secondly, the timing of the original massive school closure announcement shows that the order was not a response to activities in the school grounds, but rather suggests that the aim of the policy seems to be the interference with academic activities. The school reopening date in effect stopped children returning to school after a mid-term holiday.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

Thirdly, the fact that there was no distinction made between grades is inconsistent with the security threat claim. How is it conceivable that five and six year old children could be a threat to national security, let alone the toddlers barred from attending kindergarten?

Fourthly, the recent history of the uprising has shown us that the Israeli claim that opening schools and universities results in demonstrations is unsubstantiated. In fact, the school and university closures sparked a number of the most violent clashes. Indeed the period during which the schools were closed was one of the most turbulent and violent periods the Israeli army has encountered during the entire occupation. The Fifth reason is that there is no possible justification for banning the distribution of homework to children, and the practise of small neighbourhood study groups meeting to teach Arabic and arithmetic to small children. The banning of popular education discredits the security rationale offered for school closing. <sup>81</sup> The final reason which shows that Israel's closure policy had little to do with security is that schools in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem were dealt with quite differently to those on the West Bank, regardless of the area's level of student protest or general unrest.

#### Different Policy in East Jerusalem and Gaza.

In East Jerusalem and in the Gaza Strip, Israeli authorities have not enforced a policy of collective closure, but rather have closed schools periodically on an individual basis. East Jerusalem was unofficially annexed by Israel in 1967 and is governed by Israeli civil law (Gaza and the West Bank are

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

governed by Israeli military law). Although East Jerusalem is part of the West Bank, closure orders issued by the military for the West Bank have not been enforced in East Jerusalem. Individual closures have instead been used to disrupt Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem. Between 4 September 1988 and 31 January 1989, thirty-eight of East Jerusalem's eighty-six schools were closed indefinitely. These closures followed Israeli allegations that children had thrown stones from the schools. <sup>82</sup>

In the Gaza Strip Palestinian institutions of higher education have been closed indefinitely, but schools have not suffered blanket closures. However the widespread and frequent use of curfews in the Gaza Strip area has effectively closed schools in an area-wide manner. Defence Minister Rabin stated that "the schools were closed because they were hotbeds of disorder, unlike Gaza where even the most radical Moslem elements had agreed not to involve the schools." <sup>83</sup> However Gaza schools have not conformed to Rabin's description of them as uninvolved. There have been a tremendous number of demonstrations and subsequent clashes between students and the army, and many experts and locals claim that in fact there has been more conflict and resistance in Gaza than in the West Bank. One West Bank high school principal, baffled by the distinctions made by the military government between Gaza and the West Bank, explained that "...in Gaza there is always more violence and trouble." <sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> "In Defence of Children Under Occupation: Association Combats Israel's War on Education."

<sup>83</sup> "Uprising in Palestine : The First Year." p. 388.

<sup>84</sup> J. Brinkley, "For West Bank Arabs, Education has been Deemed a Criminal Act."

Observers have proposed a number of possible explanations for the Israeli's differential treatment of Gazan and West Bank school students. One Palestinian organisation claims that the failure to throw a blanket closure over the Gaza Strip is to avoid a "politically embarrassing row with the United Nations, whose UNRWA agency operates most of the schools in the territory." <sup>85</sup> An educational expert believes that because Gaza is much more densely populated it is in the Israeli army's interests to keep at least some schools operating. He believes that instead Israel is waging an economic war on the very poor Gazan population. Because the West Bank population is financially better off than the mainly refugee population of Gaza, an educational war is Israel's best weapon against the people of the West Bank. <sup>86</sup> Another Palestinian analyst claims that the geographical differences between Gaza and the West Bank have played a part in Israel's decision to handle the areas differently. Because the people of Gaza live in such cramped conditions, curfews are very effective and therefore extensively used. The West Bank is comprised of hundreds of sprawling villages, which means that curfews are very difficult and costly to enforce. <sup>87</sup> According to a university lecturer from Birzeit the policy is to "create differentiations between the people... to push different levels of education between the students." <sup>88</sup> All of these

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<sup>85</sup> "In Defence of Children Under Occupation: Association Combats Israel's War on Education."

<sup>86</sup> Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 20.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 20-21.

<sup>88</sup> Confidential Interview.



explanations have validity. Certainly we must agree with one critic of the attack on education who says that "... a reliable correlation between school closures and the level of violence has yet to be established. Blanket closures that fail to distinguish between regions of unrest and tranquillity are a form of collective punishment." 89

#### The Major Motivations Behind Israel's Closure Policy.

The inconsistencies in the Israelis' justifications for the school and university closures has highlighted that there most certainly are other motivations for their actions. Locals and experts alike agree that there are three major and interrelated motivations behind Israel's actions.

Firstly, educators and students believe that the closures represent a policy whose goal is the collective punishment of the entire Palestinian population. By targeting children through the assault on education, the Israelis have impaired the life of every Palestinian. In a community with such a high proportion of young people, every Palestinian is affected by the disruption of the lives of the children. The education of their youth is so important to the Palestinian population that the Israelis targeted education in an attempt to force the submission of the people. The Israelis hoped that long-term banning of such an esteemed resource would frustrate the community to such a degree that they would be prepared to trade the return of their education for a winding-down of the escalating resistance. The Israelis did not underestimate the

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89 G. D. Moffett III, "West Bank School Closings Anger Palestinians." The Christian Science Monitor, June 15-21, 1989. p. 10C.

Palestinian community's passion for learning, but they severely underestimated the widespread and efficient nature of their grass-roots community committees which stepped in to deal with the educational crisis.

Secondly, the widespread and prolonged school and university closures were designed to enforce ignorance on the Palestinian people. The UNLU in Communique No. 23 has stated that they "Wish to affirm that the closures of universities and colleges and the premature end of the school year are meant to keep our people ignorant." <sup>90</sup> Israeli Knesset member Dedi Zucher, a human-rights activist, has said that "It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the objective today is the prevention of education and the acquisition of knowledge and education - not the limitation of violent activities which are instigated in the schools." <sup>91</sup> Palestinian observers have noted that Israel has always attempted to ensure that the Palestinian people are undereducated and unskilled for very specific purposes. One is to ensure that Palestinians are more likely to be willingly to do the lowest paid, most menial jobs and therefore remain at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Another and more important reason for this is that Israel has wanted to keep Palestinians undereducated so that they would not have the skills or the understanding essential to successfully build the sort of infrastructure necessary to establish an independent state. When Palestinian students were asked why they thought the Israeli government had closed their

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<sup>90</sup> L. O'Brien, "Palestinian Universities Under Occupation 15 May- 15 August 1988." Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, (Autumn 1988), p. 192.

<sup>91</sup> Moffett III, "West Bank School Closings Anger Palestinians." p. 10C.

schools, they were very clear in their belief that the government's intention was to keep them ignorant. A secondary school student from Balata Refugee Camp said:

They want to make us ignorant. They want to reduce us to being backward and less than them. They know how highly we value our education. We know its very important; we want to know about the world and especially about our situation. We want to understand everything. This will help us to formulate the best way to struggle and to communicate our struggle. We don't have guns and weapons. We must use education... 92

The final reason motivating the Israeli government's assault on Palestinian education, particularly popular education, is their desire to control the educational process. They know that to control the education means to a large degree to control the labour force, the direction of local industry, the political and social values and the aspirations of the children. Their fear that the Palestinian community may develop their own curriculum, their own approach to learning, with an emphasis on issues pertaining to their past, or worse - their future, was very real.

Whatever motivated the Israeli government to hold the children of Palestine to ransom the way they have done, the effects of their actions will be felt for generations. The assault on Palestinian educational institutions and the community's alternative infrastructures further deepens the mistrust and hatred and pushes both sides further from any chance of communication and understanding. 93

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92 Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?, p. 39.

93 "Uprising in Palestine : The First Year." p. 389.

## CHAPTER V

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CLOSURE  
OF SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIESi. Implications For Palestinian Education

The long-term closure of educational facilities on the West Bank and Gaza, has created a number of serious consequences for the Palestinian community. The implications of the closures are wide-ranging and Palestinians must now deal with the effects of the Israeli's decision to ban all forms of education - both formal and informal. The community has collectively experienced academic, financial, cultural and social changes which have been very damaging to their way of life, and to their prospects for the future.

Academic Consequences of Closures.

While short-term school closures may be highly disruptive, they do not cause the level of academic damage that long-term educational closures inflict. The younger students stand to suffer the most serious academic losses and it is feared that many of them may face long-term learning difficulties due to the disruption in their early education. It is widely accepted by educators internationally that the denial of education at certain crucial stages leaves serious gaps in students' cognitive development. Primary school teachers claim that school closures are particularly damaging for young children who are in the process of becoming literate. Children can

suffer long-term and sometimes permanent learning impairment from such interruptions in formal education. <sup>1</sup> According to educational experts the likelihood of returning to illiteracy is marked for students through to their sixth schooling year, if a significant amount of schooling is lost. <sup>2</sup>

The second serious academic problem teachers and administrators are facing is that it has been a long since students last received instruction. It is feared that when they return to school they will have forgotten a great deal of what they had previously been taught. This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that in the years immediately preceding the blanket school and university closures, students had not been taught the full year's curriculum because of the short, sporadic closures and detention of students and staff. With the loss of one full school year, and a substantial part of a second year lost during the Intifada, the situation has reached a crisis point. As the schools reopen, teachers are facing the task of teaching the basic literacy skills to not only the first year elementary students, but to those students returning to school who have forgotten the basic skills they had already mastered. A disruption of schooling of this nature may have negative consequences on the whole educational process. For two consecutive academic years students were promoted to the next stage without completing the required

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<sup>1</sup> "Education Under Occupation : A Right Denied." Palestine, (16 June 1989), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 23.

curriculum. This has caused a significant drop in academic standards. <sup>3</sup>

For the older students the teachers face the dilemma of whether they should go back to the beginning of the curriculum and repeat material, or recommence where they finished the curriculum before the closures, and hope that most of the students will be able to understand the material. The staff of government schools are being told to go straight on to the new year's curriculum, while teachers in UNRWA and private schools are more free to choose whether to repeat material, or to proceed with the information. Most private schools have chosen to condense their curriculum. They have formulated programmes which emphasise self-learning in an attempt to avoid substantial student losses. Some schools have decided not to start the new year's curricula, but have started by teaching last year's unfinished lessons. Others have chosen to go ahead with new curriculum despite the fact that the previous year's curriculum remains uncompleted. <sup>4</sup>

The difficulty is that for most school subjects, new knowledge is built upon a foundation of understanding of concepts, facts and skills that students have learned and mastered in previous years at school. If students have not retained information pertaining to an earlier step in the learning process, they will be largely unable to grasp new facts with any real understanding. The most difficult subjects for students to

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<sup>3</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 23.

grasp without a sound understanding of the basics are science, mathematics and languages. This means that school students at all levels, face educational problems to one degree or another if they are deprived of regular instruction.

For high school seniors, the prospect of facing the final examinations (which one must pass to be eligible for entry to Arab universities) inadequately prepared, is daunting. The 1988 Tawjihi examinations were cancelled and the students' examination results from the first half of the school term were doubled to determine the final grades. This was unfair for students who had performed poorly in the mid-year examinations and who intended to improve their standards by the end of the school year. As the early examinations were held during the first few weeks of the uprising, one can appreciate that many of the students were distracted during the examinations. Many students were in fact being detained by the Israeli military authorities. In Gaza students had missed classes during the months leading up to the examinations due to curfews enforced in response to the uprising.

It is difficult to estimate the likely long-term consequences of the closures in academic terms, but Palestinian educators predict that the ramifications will be felt for at least ten to twelve years.<sup>5</sup> This may form a distinct political generation. What is known for certain is that it is not only the students currently attending schools and universities in the Occupied Territories who will be adversely affected by the closures. The Palestinian educational community will take many

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

years to re-establish the level of schooling they were able to offer students before the closure and future Palestinian students will also suffer academically because of this.

### Student Motivation.

One largely temporary consequence of the school closures was the declining motivation of students. Although the majority of Palestinian children are enthusiastic about education, under these difficult and trying circumstances students were torn. They want to fight back at the Israeli occupiers by working hard and achieving well at educational pursuits since they believe that a well educated population is one way towards establishing a strong independent state. On the other hand, they were feeling the strain of the uncertainty over the future of their schooling. They were unsure whether they will be expected to sit exams, and they were unable to adequately prepare for them without the help of the teaching staff they have lost access to. When they were allowed back into the schools, they felt confused and anxious about getting through the required material. <sup>6</sup> Students who believe that the reopening of schools is a temporary measure still struggle with feelings of frustration and lack of motivation. In particular students who have been repeatedly harassed by soldiers en route to school, and who have lost additional schooling days due to curfews, are showing signs of frustration and lack of motivation. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 32.



Some students speak of feeling tense and scared at school.

<sup>8</sup> One teacher explained that "(e)ducation is not just a book process. Students are weaned in their habits of listening, respecting others, working with their peers, and behaving as a member of a group." <sup>9</sup> Students who are completing their final high school year are understandably concerned that West Bank universities may not be open and operating when they are due to enrol. It is difficult to maintain the desire to learn when the right to attend school is repeatedly taken away from you. The attack on universities may serve to discourage students from going on to higher education. <sup>10</sup>

It seems that with the reopening of schools however, many students are now more motivated than ever before. Attendance in government, private and UNRWA schools has remained at between 95-100 percent. <sup>11</sup> "The realisation that the occupational authorities do not want them to be educated, makes education all the more desirable. This realisation has encouraged students to work more on their own and to make extra efforts to make up work for missed classes." <sup>12</sup>

Teachers have experienced similar types of motivation loss during the school closures. The difficulties they have been forced to endure are chiefly the frustration of being unable

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<sup>8</sup> "Education Under Occupation : A Right Denied." p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

to get to the children who so badly need their help, and the distressingly serious situation they came back to when schools reopened. Teachers have been expected to go on with the educational process and prepare students for examinations under a situation which makes their job virtually impossible. The cuts in staff experienced by teachers in many schools meant that those teachers who were returning to their jobs when the schools reopened were expected to incorporate the students who had lost their regular teachers. Another related problem has been that even when schools re-opened, the United Leadership of the Uprising recommended that schools close at twelve, in solidarity with the striking workers. With so much class time already lost, teachers have found this extra loss of time frustrating. Full strike days and curfews have exacerbated this problem. It is difficult for teachers to plan educational programmes which will provide continuity for their students.<sup>13</sup> The teachers who work in government schools are having the most difficult time, as they are not given the professional support they require to get them through these difficult times. Many teachers are also feeling the burden of their responsibility to ensure that a certain standard of achievement is reached by their students. Teachers who know that between 30 and 50 percent of their elementary students will fail, are finding this difficult to deal with.<sup>14</sup> Like students, the teachers are unsure whether the schools will remain open, and must now deal with a number of distracted and

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<sup>13</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 32.

frightened children. Despite the difficulties however, many teachers are beginning to regain their optimism and enthusiasm. It was noted that "...now teachers are more motivated. We are better prepared. We are accustomed to the situation and we are ready to continue with everything. Recent political events have given us further encouragement and incentive; we have seen successes." 15

#### The Increased Political Consciousness of Students.

With the re-opening of schools, a new problem emerged for teachers. The new attitudes of students and the altered nature of the relationship between themselves and the older students. The older students returned to school more street-wise and experienced than they had left. Their political consciousness had grown, and many of them were less afraid of authority. Teachers had to develop new ways to discipline and handle the students. Students have begun to challenge the traditional student/teacher relationship. They are more willing to take a more assertive role in decision-making in areas affecting their studies and the methods of teaching. Teachers are now forced to examine their own attitudes towards the role of students in the decision-making process. Teachers who are unwilling to consider their relationship with students in a new light, and instead continue to uphold the traditional values, are finding themselves facing discipline problems and an obvious lack of respect from their students. 16

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15 Ibid., p. 33-4.

16 "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 3.

Teachers generally agree that the discipline of most students has been better than expected, however students are unafraid of challenging their teachers when they disagree with them. Most of the conflict and consequent discussion between teachers and students has been regarding the uprising. The vast majority of students stand firmly behind the leadership of the uprising and are willing to follow almost all of their directives, even if that means disobeying parents' and teachers' rules.

An extreme example of the lack of discipline which teachers are experiencing from many students, occurred in West Bank schools in July 1990. Many school authorities reported that masked youths 'took over' the examination process. They blatantly distributed photocopies of the answers to the examination questions, wrote answers upon the blackboard in the examination halls, and used physical force against teachers who attempted to stop them.<sup>17</sup> This expression of rebellion and virtual anarchy exemplifies two major developments caused by the school closures; the students' fear that they will be unable to catch up on their studies sufficiently, in order to pass the impending examinations, and the diminishing respect for Palestinian authorities who appear unwilling to challenge the Israelis.

#### The Economic Consequences of the Closures.

The economic effects of the school and university closures have been devastating. The teachers, parents, and the educational institutions in particular have suffered great

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<sup>17</sup> J. Brinkley, "'Anarchy' of Cheating Hits High Schools in West Bank." New York Times, (22 July 1990).

financial losses. 1 200 teachers did not receive renewals for their teaching contracts for the 1988-89 year. More than 150 teachers who have been detained by the Israeli authorities have lost their jobs; others have been forced to take an 'early retirement'.<sup>18</sup> Some 8 000 West Bank government school teachers (who earn approximately one third of the average salary of government school teachers inside Israel) received only half-pay during four months in 1988, and many other teachers were put on unpaid holidays until further notice.<sup>19</sup> The school closures then, have been particularly hard on the teaching staff of schools and universities.

#### Effects of the Closures on Parents.

Parents have faced difficult educational and financial choices during the school closures. For families who have no adult at home during the day, child care needed to be provided for the younger children. Mothers who left their jobs to be at home with their children lost their salaries, and families who decided to pay for temporary child care, faced a large additional financial burden. This placed a tremendous strain on families who were often already struggling to deal with the social problems associated with the withdrawal of the children's access to educational services. Many families had the added dilemma of deciding whether to send their children away temporarily to school; to Jerusalem, or to a neighbouring Arab country. The costs of doing so meant that most

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<sup>18</sup> "Palestinian Education : A Threat to Israel's Security?" p. 34-5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

Palestinian families did not have this option open to them. For families who decided to do so the financial and personal costs were high.

#### Effects of Closures on Educational Institutions.

Palestinian educational institutions are facing severe financial crises as a direct result of the school and university closures. Inadequate numbers of teaching staff, little money (mainly due to the loss of tuition fees during the closures), chronic overcrowding and limited resources are the most pressing problems for the schools and universities. Many schools are facing bankruptcy because tuition fees have ceased and they are unable to keep up rent payments or pay teachers' salaries. <sup>20</sup> Administrators have taken substantial salary cuts in an attempt to avoid the crisis situation they find themselves in. Many of the students who were sent to Jerusalem schools by their families remained in these schools, as the volatile situation in the Occupied Territories did not improve. This meant that when school resumed, substantial tuition fees were lost to West Bank schools. With already overcrowded classrooms, the schools are unable to satisfy demand for first-grade instruction. With a 100 percent increase in new entrants due to the lengthy closures, public school teachers are warning that there are neither the personal nor the physical resources to accommodate the children. Many schools are now forced to spend their precious and limited energy attempting to raise money to keep the

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<sup>20</sup> "Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank: A Penalty For the Future?" p. 6.

schools operating. Administrators have had to place fundraising over the education programme as their top priority. The financial crisis is as severe for the universities, who are looking at further staff pay cuts, in order to keep the campus operating.

At present, the Palestinian teachers and administrators can only do their best in an effort to be prepared for further school and university closures. They understand that they must use ingenuity and stubborn determination to combat the Israeli attack on their education system. Educators are trying to formulate a working plan in preparation for future school closures. They are examining the possible ways of maintaining the educational process if and when the closure policy is reinforced. Some private and UNRWA schools are carrying out pilot projects on individualized instruction. Schools are attempting to prepare and test study materials which they hope will be valuable if normal schooling is interrupted again. If these projects are a success, they will probably be used as the basis for training teachers from other West Bank schools.

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#### The Reason For the Closure Policy.

The university and school closures have not reduced the levels of protest and demonstration. In fact, as stated in Chapter Four, the closures sometimes sparked protest and confrontation with the army. The closures surely have not had their desired effect which was, according to the Israelis, restoring

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<sup>21</sup> "Education Under Occupation." Educational Network, p. 3.

'peace'. The notion that the Israelis were attempting to punish the community as a whole is certainly more believable than the suggestion that this abuse of the basic human right to education was used as a way of pacifying the Palestinian community. The denial of education for Palestinian children punishes not only the present generation, but is a punishment for future generations of Palestinians. This form of collective punishment was designed to have a long-term effect on Palestinian growth and development. How detrimental these actions will be is yet to be discovered. <sup>22</sup> We can conclude then, that the real purpose behind the closures seems to be the long-term impairment to the Palestinian educational infrastructure.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 7.



## ii. Implications For Palestinian Society

Educationalists and sociologists have been concerned with the social and psychological consequences of the school and university closures as well as the academic implications. It has been difficult to gain a clear image of the likely psychological impact the closures have had on children and young Palestinians because of the chaos of life under occupation. Without official national institutions to take responsibility for this sort of research, and with the Israelis making it difficult for any Palestinian group to operate above-ground, such undertakings have been almost impossible. Educationalists have been able to establish that children's optimism or pessimism, seems to be determined by their beliefs about the likelihood of the recommencement of the educational facilities. One teacher reported:

...(T)he same student might exhibit very different, often conflicting responses to the school closures at the end of January 1989 than s/he did one month earlier when West Bank schools were still opened. Responses varied according to regional, local and personal experiences. <sup>23</sup>

### Schools Provide Important Socialization.

Without formal research it is impossible to make definitive conclusions about the psychological and social effects of the closures. Nevertheless, we can make some general observations. Schools provide youngsters with many skills other than purely academic ones. For example, at school children learn the

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<sup>23</sup> "Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank: A Penalty For the Future?" p. 57.

Schools provide youngsters with many skills other than purely academic ones. For example, at school children learn the essence of socialization. Students learn important social values; they learn to respect others, to communicate and co-operate, and to define themselves as a member of a group. Children gain a sense of social responsibility at school which is essential for their training to become members of the community. <sup>24</sup> The stable, regular structure which schools provide for children plays a vital role in the building of a strong sense of security and identity. In the current situation, where children have been withdrawn from the familiar school environment, children's security may be threatened.

One teacher relates how her younger sister was scared to leave the house or go near her school for months after schools had been shut down by the military. The only safe place remaining for this second-grade elementary student was her home. For many students whose homes have been invaded by soldiers, even this does not remain. <sup>25</sup>

The school environment provides appropriate role models and authority figures for children. Some Palestinian children who had been deprived of the school environment during the closures have displayed unwillingness to respect school authority figures and have had difficulty settling down. Students have also missed out on the social interaction which schools provide. Mixing with older, younger and same-age children and youngsters, as well as teachers, is crucial to

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

healthy social development and the learning of good communication skills.

#### The Value of Political Education.

Although educationalists are concerned that these essential learning experiences have been missed by Palestinians children who were deprived access to schools during crucial developmental stages, the political education they are experiencing on the street, may make up for this loss of formal socialization. For those aged between thirteen and sixteen, the psychological effects of the experience may be positive. They understand the significance and the meaning of the intifada. They are learning responsibility, co-operative effort, and problem-solving abilities. They are gaining tremendous self-esteem and a firm group identity. <sup>26</sup>

Children have also been deprived of cultural learning. While the schools were closed all alternative forms of education were illegal - teachers and parents were not even allowed to organise dance, music, art, or other cultural classes. Since the schools have been reopened, the teachers have been forced to give these activities a low priority. Teachers and students, desperate to make up lost classes in science, math, and languages, have been unable to justify spending normal class-time on crafts and singing sessions. For a culture which must exist largely underground even in the best circumstances,

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<sup>26</sup> Rouhana, "Children and the Intifadah." p. 120.

this is potentially very detrimental for the Palestinian culture.

In summary then, we can conclude that the withdrawal of educational services and facilities over such a long period of time caused Palestinian children, particularly the youngest ones, to suffer the loss of a vitally important learning environment. Not only did they lose the vital academic instruction provided by teachers, but they may have missed out on learning the co-operative and socialisation skills which are so crucial to early childhood development. It is impossible for us to know now the extent of the implications, either long or short term, of the loss of education, but we can predict that the consequences may be severe. Educators are surprised to observe that the political education children are receiving has not led to major behavioural problems. Palestinian children are making more independent decisions and are motivated to learn more within the context of their struggle. 27

#### The Growing Political Consciousness of Palestinian Youth.

An analysis of the social and political consequences of the school and university closures must consider the changing political consciousness of young Palestinians, as this has been one of the most far-reaching ramifications. University and senior school students have been very politically active in Palestinian society in recent years. They were in many instances the only major section of the Palestinian community

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27 "Israel's War Against Education in the Occupied West Bank: A Penalty For the Future?" p. 70.

to stand up to the Israeli authorities. While the adult Palestinian population has for a long time been intimidated into passivity by the aggressive actions of the Israelis, the youths, who have been born under occupation, have little fear.

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### The Political Consciousness of University Students.

While both secondary school and university students are involved in political activism, more is known about university student politics than about the political affiliations of secondary school students. University students operate within formalised student organisations, which are affiliated with the political factions of the PLO. Younger Palestinians who are still at school, do not work within the same structures of student political organisation, and so it is more difficult to assess the changes in their political development.

Before the universities were closed university students were a very politically active part of the Palestinian community. Their political affiliations on campus corresponded with the political organisations which existed outside the in the Occupied Territories. While the vast majority of students support the PLO., on campus they identify with one or other faction within in PLO. In the West Bank before the universities were closed, approximately 98 percent of students participated in the elections of the Student Council. 29

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<sup>28</sup> Metzger et al., This Land is Our Land : The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation, p. 13-4.

<sup>29</sup> Confidential Interview.

Since the universities were closed, one cannot talk with any real meaning of university students' political consciousness, as to all intents and purposes there are no university students. Without the functioning of the universities the previously very active student political groups, are now inoperative. A resident of Ramallah explained:

There's no purpose in meeting as students at this point because there aren't any universities, so to separate student consciousness from overall consciousness is probably not very useful, but if you look at Palestinian society as a whole, there's been a tremendous change in people's consciousness. On the most fundamental level, for the first time in many years people have their pride.

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#### The Relationship Between the Closures and the Intifada.

I propose that the school and university closures, in conjunction with the successful progress of the uprising, has led to an increase in the level of general political consciousness, and that this increased political consciousness has played a substantial role in sustaining the momentum of the intifada. It seems that the closures of the schools and the universities had different ramifications which in effect had the same result. The growth of the awareness and understanding of the general population of the political issues at the heart of the uprising.

Firstly, the closure of all schools - kindergarten, elementary, preparatory and secondary - had a dramatic effect on the lives of all Palestinians. The daily pattern of life was altered by this radical policy. The closure of the schools effectively sent thousands of young children out onto the

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30 Ibid.

streets. It was on the streets where sometimes they had gone to play, and other times they had gone to confront the army, that the children were killed and wounded by the hundreds. The response of the Palestinian community was outrage. As they grieved for their dead children, they felt new anger, anger that came from the understanding that the Israelis would continue to kill their children for as long as they would allow it to happen and anger that the Israeli decision to shut the schools had not only led to the loss of their children's education, but had led directly to the loss of their children's' lives. There also came a realisation that there is only one way to stop the Israelis killing their children - to fight for independence. As the violence between the army and the children intensified on the streets, the intifada began to gather momentum. For the first time in the history of the occupation the entire Palestinian community stood together in defiance. Mothers, uncles, grandparents, brothers and cousins stood together to fight for their survival as a people. It seems therefore, that it was the massive loss of young lives on the streets that brought the community together in a way it had never been united before.

The closure of the universities had a different effect on the Palestinian community and it was an effect that the Israelis certainly had not anticipated. In response to the closing of the universities many students have been forced to go back to their home villages or their home camps as they cannot afford to live in university towns. As a result of the dispersal of the university students who very often lived in isolation

within the academic community, the rest of the community received an injection of political enthusiasm and understanding which led to their increased politicisation. In a special report about the uprising written in 1988 the following passage appears; "The development of region-wide students', workers' and women's' organizations, and the ...closure of universities and dispersion of students, helped to organise and politicize new sections of the Palestinian community." <sup>31</sup> It seems then, that the university closures which led to the dispersal of highly politically active and motivated university students into the larger community was directly responsible for a significant growth in the awareness and political consciousness of the wider Palestinian community.

It would be simplistic to propose that either the closure of the schools and universities or the uprising were solely responsible for the changed nature of the political consciousness of the Palestinian population. Indeed, both factors have played a major role in this phenomenon which has resulted in the sustained and relatively successful nature of the intifada. Without solid research findings to back up this proposition the true role played by the closures cannot be fully analysed and explained. Unfortunately for researchers the Israeli authorities censor materials they believe may endanger Israel's 'security' and hence at this stage all we can do is speculate about the likely political implications of

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<sup>31</sup> "The Cost of Freedom : Palestinian Human Rights Under Israeli Occupation." p. 3.



the closures. It seems beyond coincidence however, that the dispersal of hundreds of university students back into the wider community and the spilling out onto the streets of thousands of school age children, occurred at the same time as the strengthening of the uprising in a show of historic solidarity. The widespread closure of schools and universities, kindergartens and all other forms of alternative education simultaneously, stands out as the only significant new factor which separates this crisis in the Occupied Territories, from others experienced by the Palestinian community during the years of occupation. I am not suggesting that the closures alone (in the absence of the uprising) would have created this response from the Palestinians but I am suggesting that the uprising would never have progressed to this point had the Israelis not closed the schools and universities.

## CONCLUSION

The intifada is an expression of the anger of the Palestinian community at the inhumane treatment they have been subjected to during the more than two decades they have lived under Israeli military rule. The uprising began with a spontaneous outbreak of emotion. The generation of Palestinians who have been raised under occupation, were the initial driving force behind the demonstrations which grew into mass protests of a scale never experienced before in the Occupied Territories. It was the youth who arrived at 'a point of no return'. No longer were they prepared to behave passively, accepting the repressive circumstances of their situation. They felt no fear, and wanted to demonstrate their new feelings of pride and empowerment. This feeling quickly swept over the whole Palestinian community, until the intifada - now into its fourth year - is now an unstoppable force.

This thesis was motivated because of the author's concern about the Israeli strategy of attacking Palestinian education as a way of hurting the community, and forcing an end to the intifada. There has been insufficient research into this abuse of human rights. Although academics throughout the west have protested, not enough pressure has been put on Israel to reinstate the Palestinians' right to education. The implications of preventing a generation of Palestinians access to education are tremendous.

The Israelis have targeted formal and informal education (along with other community-based, grassroots institutions) in their efforts to break the uprising. The Israeli authorities illegally closed schools and universities long-term. They claim that these institutions are breeding grounds for terrorists, and that their continued operation threatens Israeli security. I have clearly demonstrated the inconsistencies in the Israeli arguments and have shown how in reality, the closures have a very different purpose. The policy of attacking Palestinian education has certainly failed to bring an end to the intifada. In fact, I propose that rather than undermining the effectiveness of the intifada, the school closure policy, by putting young Palestinians at risk on the streets, and by sending highly politicized university students back into the community, has in fact fuelled the intifada.

There are several primary reasons for the attack on education. Firstly, the Israelis are attempting to make life as difficult as possible by undermining the few rights Palestinians currently benefit from. The Palestinian population figures show how greatly the community is affected by closures of educational institutions. Virtually every family includes at least one student, and most, many more. The disruption to their daily lives caused by school and university closures, combined with the anger and frustration caused by the loss of their access to education (which is very highly valued by Palestinians) puts a tremendous strain on ordinary Palestinians. Parents are torn between patriotic feelings in

solidarity with their nationalistic cause, and their desire as parents for their children to attain a good education in order to have a better life. They and their children are the ones who are the victims of the manipulations of both Israeli and Palestinian leaders who are using education in an attempt to attain their political goals.

The second major reason for targeting education, is the Israeli desire to keep the Palestinian population undereducated. One key reason is to eliminate the ability of Palestinians to develop the skills and knowledge needed to build a strong Palestinian state. Israel is currently very concerned that international pressure will eventually force a resolution of the Arab/Israeli crisis. Recent events in the Gulf bring the likelihood of this even closer. The intention of the Palestinians to create an independent Palestinian state was declared when the PLO announced the formation of the State of Palestine in November 1988. If this resolution is ever forced upon the Israelis, they want to ensure that the Palestinians are unable to create and run a powerful state. The Israeli desire to keep the Palestinians undereducated for other reasons. As a colonizer of the land, they want to keep the Arabs in an inferior social and economic position. An undereducated Palestinian labour force will carry out the menial jobs which Jewish Israeli citizens do not want to do. This reflects the South African and many other colonized countries' labour situation. By preventing the Palestinians access to either formal or informal education, the Israeli regime is hoping to keep them passive. The Israelis are very

aware that an educated minority group translates to a politically conscious minority. These Israeli actions correspond with the theoretical framework of classical and internal colonialism which I have presented.

That Israel has deliberately undermined the education of the Palestinian people during a time of great anger and turbulence may have many interesting repercussions. Because children and young Palestinians have been unable to go to school, they have effectively been forced out into the streets where they have received a very intensive political education. The implications of the birth of a new generation of highly politically motivated and aware Palestinians may in the long-term outweigh any benefits Israel may receive by withdrawing formal education. (I have discussed the possible implications of the loss of formal learning in the thesis). If Israel maintains its political control over the Occupied Territories, it may have to deal in a decade's time, with an even more uncontrollable politically scarred generation of Palestinians. On the other hand, the implications of the impact of this generation being the generation who form an independent Palestinian state are interesting and important.

Further research into the effects and consequences of the withdrawal of formal education and the acquisition of a political education on a young population, would contribute greatly to our understanding of this internationally important phenomenon.

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